Tyrannick Love:

OR, THE

Royal Martyr.

A

TRAGEDY.

As it is Acted by his Majesties Servants, at the *THEATRE ROYAL.*

BY

JOHN DRYDEN, Servant to his *MAJESTY.*

The Second Edition, review'd by the Authour.

Non jam prima peto ——— neq; vincere certo,
Extremum rediisse pudet. ——— Virg.

LONDON,

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To the most Illustrious Prince, James *Duke of* Monmouth *and* Bucclugh, *one of His Majesties most Honourable Privy-Council, and Knight of the most Noble Order of the Garter*, &c.

SIR,

THE favourable Reception which your Excellent Lady afforded to one of my former Plays, has encourag'd me to double my presumption, in addressing this to your Graces Patronage. So dangerous a thing it is to admit a Poet into your family, that you can never afterwards be free from the chiming of ill Verses, perpetually sounding in your ears, and more troublesom than the neighbourhood of Steeples. I have been favourable to my self in this expression; a zealous Fanatick would have gone farther, and have called me the Serpent, who first presented the fruit of my Poetry to the Wife, and so gain'd the opportunity to seduce the Husband. Yet I am ready to avow a Crime so advantagious to me; but the World, which will condemn my boldness, I am sure will justifie and applaud my choice. All men will joyn with me in the adoration which I pay you, they would wish only I had brought you a more noble Sacrifice. Instead of an Heroick Play, you might justly expect an Heroick Poem, filled with the past Glories of your Ancestors,

& the future certainties of your own. Heaven has already taken care to form you for an Heroe. You have all the advantages of Mind and Body, and an Illustrious Birth, conspiring to render you an extraordinary Person. The *Achilles* and the *Rinaldo* are present in you, even above their Originals; you only want a *Homer* or a *Tasso* to make you equal to them. Youth, Beauty, and Courage (all which you possess in the height of their perfection) are the most desirable gifts of Heaven: and Heaven is never prodigal of such Treasures, but to some uncommon purpose. So goodly a Fabrick was never framed by an Almighty Architect for a vulgar Guest. He shewed the value which he set upon your Mind, when he took care to have it so nobly and so beautifully lodg'd. To a graceful fashion and deportment of Body, you have joyned a winning Conversation, and an easie Greatness, derived to you from the best, and best belov'd of Princes. And with a great power of obliging, the world has observed in you, a desire to oblige, even beyond your power. This and all that I can say on so excellent and large a Subject, is only History, in which Fiction has no part; I can employ nothing of Poetry in it, any more, than I do in that humble protestation which I make, to continue ever.

Your Graces most obedient

and most devoted Servant,

John Dryden.

PREFACE.

I Was mov'd to write this Play by many reaſons: amongſt others, the Commands of ſome Perſons of Honour, for whom I have a moſt particular reſpect, were daily ſounding in my ears, that it would be of good Example to undertake a Poem of this Nature. Neither were my own inclinations wanting to ſecond their deſires. I conſidered that pleaſure was not the only end of Poeſie; and that even the inſtructions of Morality were not ſo wholly the buſineſs of a Poet, as that the Precepts and Examples of Piety were to be omitted. For to leave that employment altogether to the Clergie, were to forget that Religion was firſt taught in Verſe: (which the lazineſs or dulneſs of ſucceeding Prieſthood, turn'd afterwards into Proſe.) And it were alſo to grant, (which I never ſhall,) that repreſentations of this kind may not as well be conducing to Holineſs, as to good Manners. Yet far be it from me, to compare the uſe of Dramatique Poeſie with that of Divinity: I only maintain, againſt the Enemies of the Stage, that patterns of piety, decently repreſented, and equally remov'd from the extremes of Superſtition and Prophaneneſs, may be of excellent uſe to ſecond the Precepts of our Religion. By the Harmony of words we elevate the mind to a ſenſe of Devotion, as our ſolemn Muſick, which is inarticulate Poeſie, does in Churches. And by the lively images of piety, adorn'd by action, through the ſenſes allure the Soul: which while it is charmed in a ſilent joy of what it ſees and hears, is ſtruck at the ſame time with a ſecret veneration of things Celeſtial: and is wound up inſenſibly into the practice of that which it admires. Now, if, inſtead of this, we ſometimes ſee on our Theaters, the Examples of Vice rewarded, or at leaſt unpuniſhed; yet it ought not to be an Argument againſt the Art, any more than the Extravagances and Im-

pieties of the Pulpit in the late times of Rebellion, can be againſt the Office and Dignity of the Clergie.

But many times it happens, that Poets are wrongfully accus'd; as it is my own Caſe in this very Play; where I am charg'd by ſome ignorant or malicious perſons, with no leſs Crimes than Prophaneſs and Irreligion.

The part of Maximin, *againſt which theſe holy Criticks ſo much declaim, was deſigned by me to ſet off the Character of S.* Catharine. *And thoſe who have read the Roman Hiſtory, may eaſily remember, that* Maximin *was not only a bloody Tyrant,* vaſtus corpore, animo ferus, *as* Herodian *deſcribes him; but alſo a Perſecutor of the Church, againſt which he raiſed the ſixth Perſecution. So that whatſoever he ſpeaks or acts in this Tragedy, is no more than a Record of his life and manners; a picture as near as I could take it, from the Original. If with much pains and ſome ſucceſs I have drawn a deform'd piece, there is as much of Art, and as near an imitation of Nature, in a* Lazare *as in a* Venus. Maximin *was an Heathen, and what he ſpeaks againſt Religion, is in contempt of that which he profeſs'd. He defies the Gods of* Rome, *which is no more than S.* Catharine *might with decency have done. If it be urged, that a perſon of ſuch principles who ſcoffes at any Religion, ought not to be preſented on the Stage; why then are the lives and ſayings of ſo many wicked and prophane perſons, recorded in the Holy Scriptures? I know it will be anſwer'd, That a due uſe may be made of them; that they are remembred with a Brand of Infamy fixt upon them; and ſet as Sea-marks for thoſe who behold them to avoid. And what other uſe have I made of* Maximin? *have I propoſed him as a pattern to be imitated, whom even for his impiety to his falſe Gods I have ſo ſeverely puniſhed? Nay, as if I had foreſeen this Objection I purpoſely remov'd the Scene of the Play which ought to have been at* Alexandria *in* Egypt, *(where S.* Catharine *ſuffer'd) and laid it under the Walls of* Aquileia *in* Italy, *where* Maximin *was ſlain: that the puniſhment of his Crime might immediately ſucceed its execution.*

This, Reader, is what I ow'd to my juſt defence, and the due reverence of that Religion which I profeſs, to which all men, who deſire to be eſteemed good or honeſt are obliged: I have neither leiſure nor occaſion to write more largely on this ſubject, becauſe I am already

already justified by the sentence of the best and most discerning Prince in the World, by the suffrage of all unbiass'd Judges; and above all, by the witness of my own Conscience, which abhors the thought of such a Crime; to which I ask leave to add my outward Conversation, which shall never be justly tax'd with the Note of Atheism or Prophaneness.

In what else concerns the Play, I shall be brief: for the faults of the writing and contrivance, I leave them to the mercy of the Reader. For I am as little apt to defend my own Errours, as to find those of other Poets. Only I observe, that the great Censors of Wit and Poetry, either produce nothing of their own, or what is more ridiculous than any thing they reprehend. Much of ill Nature, and a very little Judgement, go far in finding the mistakes of Writers.

I pretend not that any thing of mine can be Correct: This Poem, especially, which was contrived and written in seven weeks, though afterwards hindred by many accidents from a speedy representation, which would have been its best excuse.

Yet the Scenes are every where unbroken, and the unities of place and time more exactly kept, than perhaps is requisite in a Tragedy; or at least then I have since preserv'd them in the Conquest of Granada.

I have not every where observed the equality of numbers, in my Verse; partly by reason of my haste; but more especially because I would not have my sense a slave to Syllables.

'Tis easie to discover, that I have been very bold in my alteration of the Story, which of it self was too barren for a Play: and, that I have taken from the Church two Martyrs, in the persons of Porphyrius *and the Empress, who suffer'd for the Christian Faith, under the Tyranny of* Maximin.

I have seen a French Play, called the Martyrdom of S. Catharine: *but those who have read it, will soon clear me from stealing out of so dull an Author. I have only borrow'd a mistake from him, of one* Maximin *for another: for finding him in the French Poet, call'd the Son of a Thracian Herds-man, and an* Alane *Woman, I too easily believ'd him to have been the same* Maximin *mention'd in* Herodian. *Till afterwards, consulting* Eusebius *and* Metaphrastes, *I found the French-man had betrayed me into an Errour (when it was too late to alter it) by mistaking that first* Maximin *for a second, the Contemporary of* Constantine *the Great, and one of the Usurpers of the Eastern Empire.*

But

But neither was the other name of my Play more fortunate: for as some who had heard of a Tragedy of S. Catharine, *imagin'd I had taken my plot from thence; so others, who had heard of another Play called* L'Amour Tyrannique, *with the same ignorance, accus'd me to have borrow'd my design from it, because I have accidentally given my Play the same Title; not having to this day seen it: and knowing only by report, that such a Comedy is extant in French, under the name of Monsieur* Scudery.

As for what I have said of Astral or Aerial Spirits it is no invention of mine, but taken from those who have written on that Subject. Whether there are such Beings or not, it concerns not me; 'tis sufficient for my purpose, that many have believ'd the affirmative: and that these Heroick Representations, which are of the same Nature with the Epick, are not limited, but with the extremest bounds of what is credible.

For the little Critiques who pleas'd themselves with thinking they have found a flaw in that line of the Prologue, (And he who servilely creeps after sence, is safe &c.) *as if I patroniz'd my own nonsence, I may reasonably suppose they have never read* Horace. Serpit humi tutus *&c. are his words: He who creeps after plaine, dull, common sence, is safe from committing absurdities; but, can never reach any heighth, or excellence of wit: and sure I could not meane that any excellence were to be found in nonsence. With the same ignorance or malice, they would accuse me for useing,* empty armes, *when I writ of a Ghost or shadow: which has onely the appearance of a body or limbs; and is empty or voyd of flesh and blood; and* vacuis amplectitur ulnis, *was an expression of* Ovids *on the same subject. Some foole before them had charg'd me in the* Indian Emperour *with nonsence in these words,* And follow fate which does too fast pursue. *Which was borrow'd from* Virgil *in the xith of his Æneids,* Eludit gyro interior, sequiturque sequentem. *I quote not these to prove that I never write Nonsence, but onely to show that they are so unfortunate as not to have found it.*

Vale.

Prologue.

SElf-love (which never rightly underſtood)
Makes Poets ſtill conclude their Plays are good:
And malice in all Criticks raigns ſo high,
That for ſmall Errors, they whole Plays decry;
So that to ſee this fondneſs, and that ſpite,
You'd think that none but Mad-men judge or write.
Therefore our Poet, as he thinks not fit
T' impoſe upon you, what he writes for Wit,
So hopes that leaving you your cenſures free,
You equal Judges of the whole will be:
They judge but half who only faults will ſee.
Poets like Lovers ſhould be bold and dare,
They ſpoil their buſineſs with an over-care.
And he who ſervilely creeps after ſence,
Is ſafe, but ne're will reach an Excellence.
Hence 'tis our Poet in his conjuring,
Allow'd his Fancy the full ſcope and ſwing.
But when a Tyrant for his Theme he had,
He loos'd the Reins, and bid his Muſe run mad:
And though he ſtumbles in a full career;
Yet raſhneſs is a better fault than fear.
He ſaw his way; but in ſo ſwift a pace,
To chuſe the ground, might be to loſe the race.
They then who of each trip th' advantage take,
Find but thoſe Faults which they want Wit to make.

Perſons

Perſons Repreſented.

Maximin, *Tyrant of* Rome.	By Major *Mohun.*
Porphyrius, *Captain of the Pretorian Bands.*	Mr. *Hart.*
Charinus, *the Emperour's Son.*	Mr. *Harris.*
Placidius, *a great Officer.*	Mr. *Kynaſton.*
Valerius, *Tribunes of the Army.*	Mr. *Lydall.*
Albinus, *Tribunes of the Army.*	Mr. *Littlewood.*
Nigrinus, *a Tribune and Conjurer.*	Mr. *Beeſton.*
Amariel, *Guardian-Angel to S.* Catharine.	Mr. *Bell.*
Apollonius, *a Heathen Philoſopher.*	Mr. *Cartwright.*

Berenice, *Wife to* Maximin.	By Mrs. *Marſhall.*
Valeria, *Daughter to* Maximin.	Mrs. *Ellen Gwyn.*
S. Catharine, *Princeſs of* Alexandria.	Mrs. *Bowtell.*
Felicia, *her Mother.*	Mrs. *Knepp.*
Erotion, *Attendants.*	Mrs. *Uphill.*
Cydnon, *Attendants.*	Mrs. *Eaſtland.*

SCENE *The Camp of Maximin*, under the Walls of *Aquileia.*

Tyrannick

Tyrannick Love:

OR, THE

Royal Martyr.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Camp or Pavilion Royal.

Maximin, Charinus, Placidius, Albinus, Valerius, Apollonius, *Guards.*

Max. THUS far my Arms have with ſucceſs been crown'd,
And found no ſtop, or vanquiſh'd what they found.
The German Lakes my Legions have o're-paſt,
With all the bars which Art or Nature caſt:
My Foes, in watry Faſtneſſes incloſ'd,
I ſought, alone, to their whole War expos'd.
Did firſt the depth of trembling Marſhes ſound,
And fix'd my Eagles inunfaithful ground:
By force ſubmitted to the Roman ſway
Fierce Nations, and unknowing to obey:
And now, for my reward, ungrateful *Rome*
For which I fought abroad, rebels at home.

Alb. Yet 'tis their fear which does this War maintain:
They cannot brook a Martial Monarchs Raign:
Your Valour would their ſloth too much accuſe;
And therefore, like themſelves, they Princes chuſe.

Placid. Two, tame, gown'd Princes, who at eaſe, debate

In lazy Chairs, the buſineſs of the State:
Who reign but while the people they can pleaſe,
And only know the little Arts of Peace.
Char. In fields they dare not fight where Honour calls;
But breathe a faint defiance from their Walls.
The very noiſe of War their Souls does wound;
They quake, but hearing their own Trumpets ſound.
Val. An eaſie Summons but for form they wait,
And to your Fame will open wide the gate.
Placid. I wiſh our Fame that ſwift ſucceſs may find;
But Conqueſts, Sir, are eaſily deſign'd:
However ſoft within themſelves they are,
To you they will be valiant by deſpair:
For having once been guilty, well they know
To a revengeful Prince they ſtill are ſo.
Alb. 'Tis true, that, ſince the Senates ſuccours came,
They grow more bold.
Max. ——— That Senate's but a name;
Or they are Pageant Princes which they make;
That pow'r they give away, they would partake.
Two equal pow'rs, two different ways will draw,
While each may check, and give the other Law.
True, they ſecure propriety and peace;
But are not fit an Empire to increaſe.
When they ſhould aid their Prince, the Slaves diſpute;
And fear ſucceſs ſhould make him abſolute.
They let Foes conquer, to ſecure the State,
And lend a Sword, whoſe edge themſelves rebate.
Char. When to increaſe the Gods you fate are gone,
I'le ſwiftly chuſe to dye, or reign alone:
But theſe half-Kings our courage cannot fright;
The thrifty State will bargain e're they fight:
Give juſt ſo much for every Victory;
And rather loſe a fight, than over-buy.
Max. Since all delays are dangerous in War,
Your men, *Albinus*, for aſſault prepare:
Criſpinus and *Menephilus*, I hear
Two Conſulars, theſe *Aquilians* chear;

By whom they may, if we protract the time,
Be taught the courage to defend their crime.
Placid. Put off th'assault but only for this day;
No loss can come by such a small delay.
Char. We are not sure to morrow will be ours:
Wars have, like Love, their favourable hours:
Let us use all; for if we lose one day;
That white one, in the crowd, may slip away.
Max. Fates dark recesses we can never find;
But Fortune at some hours to all is kind;
The lucky have whole days, which still they choose;
Th'unlucky have but hours, and those they lose.
Placid. I have consulted one, who reads Heav'ns doom,
And sees, as present, things which are to come.
'Tis that *Nigrinus*, made by your command
A Tribune in the new Panonian Band.
Him have I seen, (on *Ister's* Banks he stood,
Where last we winter'd) bind the head-long flood
In sudden ice; and where most swift it flows,
In chrystal nets, the wond'ring fishes close.
Then, with a moments thaw, the streams inlarge,
And from the Mesh the twinkling Guests discharge.
In a deep vale, or near some ruin'd wall
He would the Ghosts of slaughter'd Souldiers call;
Who, slow, to wounden bodies did repair,
And loth to enter, shiver'd in the air;
These his dread Wand did to short life compel,
And forc'd the Fates of Battels to foretel.
Max. 'Tis wond'rous strange! But, good *Placidius*, say,
What propheses *Nigrinus* of this day?
Placid. In a lone Tent, all hung with black, I saw
Where in a Square he did a Circle draw;
Four Angles, made by that circumference,
Bore holy words inscrib'd, of mystick sence.
When first a hollow wind began to blow,
The Sky grew black, and belli'd down more low,
Around the fields did nimble Lightning play,
Which offer'd us by fits, and snatch'd the day.

'Midst this, was heard the shrill and tender cry
Of well-pleas'd Ghosts, which in the storm did fly;
Danc'd to and fro, and skim'd along the ground,
Till to the Magick Circle they were bound.
They coursing it, while we were fenc'd within,
We saw this dreadful Scene of Fate begin.

Char. Speak without fear; what did the Vision shew?

Placid. A Curtain drawn presented to our view,
A Town besieg'd; and on the neighbring Plain
Lay heaps of visionary Souldiers slain.
A rising mist obscur'd the gloomy head
Of one, who in Imperial Robes lay dead.
Near this, in Fetters stood a Virgin, crown'd;
Whom many *Cupids* strove in vain to wound:
A voice to morrow, still to morrow rung;
Another *Io*; *Io*, *Pæan* sung.

Char. Visions and Oracles still doubtful are,
And ne're expounded till th'event of War.
The Gods fore-knowledge on our Swords will wait:
If we fight well, they must fore-show good Fate.

To them a Centurion.

Cent. A rising dust which troubles all the air,
And this way travels, shows some Army near.

Char. I hear the sound of Trumpets from afar. [*Exit* Albinus.

Max. It seems the voice of Triumph, not of War.

To them Albinus *again.*

Alb. Health and success our Emperour attends:
The Forces marching on the Plain, are friends.
Porphyrius, whom you *Ægypti* Prætor made,
Is come from *Alexandria* to your aid.

Max. It well becomes the conduct and the care
Of one so fam'd and fortunate in War.
You must resign, *Placidius*, your Command,
To him I promis'd the Prætorian Band.
Your duty in your swift compliance show,
I will provide some other charge for you.

Placid. May *Cæsar's* pleasure ever be obey'd
With that submission, which by me is paid.

Now

Now all the Curſes envy ever knew,
Or could invent, *Porphyrius* purſue. *Aſide.*
Alb. *Placidius* does too tamely bear his loſs; [*To* Charinus.
This new pretender will all pow'r ingroſs:
All things muſt now by his direction move;
And you, Sir, muſt reſign your Father's love.
Char. Yes; every name to his repute muſt bow;
There grow no Bayes for any other brow.
He blaſts my early Honour in the bud,
Like ſome tall Tree the Monſter of the Wood,
O're-ſhading all which under him would grow,
He ſheds his venim on the Plants below.
Alb. You muſt ſome noble action undertake;
Equal with his your own renown to make.
Char. I am not for a ſlothful envy born,
I'll do't this day, in the dire Viſions ſcorn.
He comes: We two, like the twin Stars appear;
Never to ſhine together in one Sphere. *Exit cum* Alb.

Enter Porphyrius *attended.*

Max. *Porphyrius*, welcome, welcome as the light
To cheerful Birds; or as to Lovers, night.
Welcome as what thou bring'ſt me, Victory.
Por. That waits, Sir, on your Arms, and not on me.
You left a Conqueſt more than half atchiev'd;
And for whoſe eaſineſs I almoſt griev'd.
Yours only the *Egyptian* Laurels are;
I bring you but the reliques of your War.
The Chriſtian Princeſs to receive your doom,
Is from her Conquer'd *Alexandria* come.
Her Mother in another Veſſel ſent,
A Storm ſurpriz'd; nor know I the event:
Both from your bounty muſt receive their ſtate;
Or muſt on your triumphant Chariot wait.
Max. From me they can expect no grace, whoſe minds
An execrable ſuperſtition blinds.

Apoll.

Apoll. The Gods who rais'd you to the Worlds Command,
Require these Victims from your grateful hand.
Por. To minds resolv'd, the threats of Death are vain;
They run to fires, and there enjoy their pain:
Not *Mucius* made more hast his hand t'expose
To greedy flames, than their whole bodies those.
Max. How, to their own destruction, they are blind!
Zeal is the pious madness of the mind.
Por. They all our fam'd Philosophers defy;
And would our Faith by force of reason try.
Apoll. I beg it, Sir, by all the pow'rs Divine,
That in their right, this Combat may be mine.
Max. It shall; and fifty Doctors of our Laws,
Be added to you, to maintain the cause.

Enter Berenice *the Empress*, Valeria *Daughter to the Emperour*, Erotion.

Placid. The Empress and your Daughter, Sir, are here,
Por. What dangers in those charming Eyes appear!
Looking on the Empress.
How my old wounds are open'd at this view!
And in my murd'rers presence bleed anew!
Max. I did expect your coming to partake *To the Ladies.*
The general gladness which my Triumphs make.
You did *Porphyrius* as a Courtier know;
But as a Conquerour behold him now.
Ber. You know (I read it in your blushing face) *To* Por.
To merit, better than receive a grace:
And I know better silently to own,
Than with vain words to pay your service done.
Por. Princes, like Gods, reward e're we deserve;
Kneeling to kiss her hand.
And pay us in permitting us to serve.
Oh might I still grow here, and never move! *(lower.)*
Ber. How dangerous are these extasies of Love!
He shows his passion to a thousand Eyes!
He cannot stir, nor can I bid him rise!

That

That word my heart refuses to my tongue! *Aside.*

Max. Madam, you let the General kneel too long.

Por. Too long, as if Eternity were so! *Aside.*

Ber. Rise, good *Porphyrius*, (since it must be so.) *Aside.*

Por. Like Hermits from a Vision I retire; *rising.*
With Eyes too weak to see what I admire. *Aside.*

Val. The Empress knows your worth; but, Sir, there be, *To* Porphyrius, *who kisses her hand.*
Those who can value it as high as she.
And 'tis but just, (since in my Fathers cause,
You fought) your Valour should have my applause.

Placid. O Jealousie, how art thou Eagle-ey'd!
She loves; and would her Love in praises hide:
How am I bound this Rival to pursue,
Who ravishes my Love and Fortune too! *Aside.*

A Dead March within, and Trumpets.

Max. Somewhat of mournful, sure, my Ears does wound;
Like the hoarse murmurs of a Trumpets sound,
And Drums unbrac'd, with Souldiers broken cryes.

Enter Albinus.

Albinus, Whence proceeds this dismal noise?

Alb. Too soon you'l know what I want words to tell.

Max. How fares my Son? Is my *Charinus* well?
Not answer me! Oh my prophetique fear!

Alb. How can I speak; or how, Sir, can you hear?
Imagine that which you would most deplore,
And that which I would speak, is it, or more.

Max. Thy mournful message in thy looks I read:
Is he (oh that I live to ask it) dead?

Alb. Sir——

Max. Stay; if thou speak'st that word, thou speak'st thy last:
Some God now, if he dares, relate what's past:
Say but he's dead, that God shall mortal be.

Alb. Then, what I dare not speak, look back and see.

Charinus *born in dead by Souldiers.*

Max.

Max. See nothing, Eyes, henceforth, but Death and wo,
You've done me the worst office you can do.
Youv'e shown me Destinies prepost'rous crime;
An unripe fate; disclos'd e're Nature's time.

Placid. Asswage, great Prince, your passion, lest you show
There's somewhat in your Soul which Fate can bow.

For. Fortune should by your greatness be controul'd:
Arm your great mind, and let her take no hold.

Max. To tame Philosophers teach constancy;
There is no farther use of it in me.
Gods (but why name I you!
All that was worth a pray'r to you is gone:)
I ask not back my Vertue, but my Son.

Alb. His too great thirst of fame his ruine brought.
Though, Sir, beyond all humane force he fought.

Placid. This was my Vision of this fatal day!

Alb. With a fierce hast he led our Troops the way:
While fiery show'rs of Sulphur on him rain'd;
Nor left he, till the Battlements he gain'd:
There with a Forest of their Darts he strove;
And stood like *Capaneus* defying *Jove.*
With his broad Sword the boldest beating down,
While Fate grew pale lest he should win the Town.
And, turn'd the Iron leafs of its dark Book,
To make new dooms; or mend what it mistook.
Till sought by many Deaths, he sunk though late,
And by his fall asserted doubtful Fate.

Vale. Oh my Dear Brother! whom Heav'n let us see,
And would not longer suffer him to be!

Max. And didst not thou a Death with Honour chuse, *To* Alb.
But impudently liv'st to bring this news?
After his loss how did'st thou dare to breath?
——But thy base Ghost shall follow him in death.
A decimation I will strictly make
Of all who my *Charinus* did forsake.
And of each Legion each Centurion
Shall dye: — *Placidius*, see my pleasure done.

For.

Por. Sir, you will loſe by this ſeverity
Your Souldiers hearts.
Max. — Why, they take Pay to dye.
Por. Then ſpare *Albinus* only.
Max. ——— I conſent
To leave his life to be his puniſhment.
Diſcharg'd from truſt; branded with infamy
Let him live on, till he aſk leave to dye.
Ber. Let me petition for him.
Max. ——— I have ſaid:
And will not be intreated, but obey'd.
But, Empreſs, whence does your compaſſion grow?
Ber. You need not aſk it, ſince my birth you know.
The Race of *Antonin's* was nam'd the Good:
I draw my pity from my Royal Blood.
Max. Still muſt I be upbraided with your Line?
I know you ſpeak it in contempt of mine.
But your late Brother did not prize me leſs,
Becauſe I could not boaſt of Images.
And the Gods own'd me more when they decreed
A Thracian Shepherd ſhould your Line ſucceed.
Ber. The Gods! O do not name the pow'rs divine,
They never mingled their Decrees with thine.
My Brother gave me to thee for a Wife,
And for my Dowry thou didſt take his life.
Max. The Gods by many Victories have ſhown,
That they my merits and his death did own.
Ber. Yes: they have own'd it; witneſs this juſt day;
When they begin thy miſchiefs to repay.
See the reward of all thy wicked care,
Before thee thy ſucceſſion ended there.
Yet but in part my Brothers Ghoſt is pleas'd:
Reſtleſs till all the groaning world be eas'd.
For me; no other happineſs I owne
Than to have born no Iſſue to thy Throne.
Max. Provoke my rage no farther, leſt I be
Reveng'd at once upon the Gods and thee.

Por. aside.] What horrid tortures seize my lab'ring mind!
O, only excellent of all thy kind!
To hear thee threatned while I idle stand:
Heav'n! was I born to fear a Tyrants hand?

Max. to Ber. Hence from my sight,--thy blood, if thou dost stay,--

Ber. Tyrant! too well to that thou know'st the way. (*going.*)

Por. Let baser Souls from falling Fortunes flye:
I'le pay my duty to her, though I dye. *Exit leading her.*

Max. What made *Porphyrius* so officious be?
The action look'd as done in scorn of me.

Val. It did, indeed, some little freedom show;
But somewhat to his Services you owe.

Max, Yet, if I thought it his presumption were———

Placid. Perhaps he did not your displeasure hear.

Max. My anger was too loud, not to be heard.

Placid. I'm loth to think he did it not regard.

Max. How, not regard!

Val. Placidius, you foment
On too light grounds my Father's discontent.
But when an action does two faces wear,
'Tis Justice to believe what is most fair.
I think, that knowing what respect there rests
For her late Brother in the Souldiers breasts,
He went to serve the Emp'rour: and design'd
Only to calm the tempest in her mind,
Lest some Sedition in the Camp should rise.

Max. I ever thought him loyal as he's wise.
Since therefore, all the Gods their spight have shown
To rob my Age of a successive Throne;
And you who now remain
The only Issue of my former bed
In Empire cannot by your Sex succeed:
To bind *Porphyrius* firmly to the State,
I will this day my *Cæsar* him create:
And, Daughter, I will give him you for Wife.

Val. O day, the best and happiest of my life!

Placid. O day, the most accurst I ever knew! *Aside.*

Max. See to my Son perform'd each Funeral due;

Then

Then to the toyls of War we will return;
And make our Enemies our losses mourn. *Exeunt.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

The Royal Camp.

Berenice, Porphyrius.

Ber. *Porphyrius*, you too far did tempt your Fate,
In owning her the Emperour does hate.
'Tis true, your duty to me it became;
But, praising that, I must your conduct blame.
Por. Not to have own'd my zeal at such a time,
Were to sin higher than your Tyrants crime,
Ber. 'Twas too much my disgrace t'accompany;
A silent wish had been enough for me.
Por. Wishes are aids, faint Servants may supply,
Who ask Heav'n for you what themselves deny.
Could I do less than my respect to pay,
Where I before had giv'n my heart away?
Ber. You fail in that respect you seem to bear,
When you speak words unfit for me to hear,
Por. Yet you did once accept those vows I paid.
Ber. Those vows were then to *Berenice* made;
But cannot now be heard without a sin,
When offer'd to the Wife of *Maximin*.
Por. Has, then, the change of Fortune chang'd your will?
Ah! why are you not *Berenice* still?
To *Maximin* you once declar'd your hate;
Your Marriage was a Sacrifice to th' State:
Your Brother made it to secure his Throne,
Which this man made a step to mount it on.
Ber. Whatever *Maximin* has been, or is,
I am to bear, since Heav'n has made me his.
For wives, who must themselves of pow'r devest,
When they love blindly, for their peace love best.

Por. If mutual love be vow'd when faith you plight,
Then he, who forfeits first, has lost his right.
Ber. Husbands a forfeiture of love may make;
But what avails the forfeit none can take?
As in a general wreck
The Pirate sinks with his ill-gotten gains,
And nothing to anothers use remains:
So, by his loss, no gain to you can fall:
The Sea, and vast destruction swallows all.
Por. Yet he, who from the shore, the wreck descrys,
May lawfully intich him with the prize.
Ber. Who sees the wreck can yet no title plead,
Till he be sure the Owner first is dead.
Por. If that be all the claim I want to love,
This Pirate of your heart I'le soon remove;
And, at one stroke, the world and you set free.
Ber. Leave to the care of Heav'n that world and me.
Por. Heav'n, as its instrument my courage sends.
Ber. Heav'n ne'r sent those who fight for private ends.
We both are bound by trust, and must be true;
I to his Bed, and to his Empire you.
For he who to the bad betrays his trust,
Though he does good, becomes himself unjust.
Por. When *Brutus* did from *Cæsar Rome* redeem,
The Act was good.
Ber. ——But was not good in him.
You see the Gods adjudg'd it Parricide,
By dooming the event on *Cæsar's* side.
'Tis vertue not to be oblig'd at all;
Or not conspire our Benefactors fall.
Por. You doom me then to suffer all this ill,
And yet I doom my self to love you still.
Ber. Dare not *Porphyrius* suffer then with me,
Since what for him I for my self decree?
Por. How can I bear those griefs you disapprove?
Ber. To ease 'em, I'le permit you still to love.
Por. That will but haste my death, if you think fit
Not to reward, but barely to permit.

Love without hope does like a torture wound,
Which makes me reach in pain, to touch the ground.

Ber. If hope, then, to your life so needful be,
Hope still.

Por. ——— Blest News!

Ber. ——— —— But hope, in Heav'n, not me.

Por. Love is too noble such deceits to use,
Referring me to Heav'n, your gift I lose.
So Princes cheaply may our wants supply,
When they give that their Treasurers deny.

Ber. Love blinds my Vertue: if I longer stay,
It will grow dark, and I shall lose my way.

Por. One kiss from this fair hand can be no sin;
I ask not that you gave to *Maximin*.
In full reward of all the pains I've past,
Give me but one.

Ber. ——— Then let it be your last.

Por. 'Tis gone!
Like Souldiers prodigal of their Arrears,
One minute spends the Pay of many years.
——— Let but one more be added to the sum,
And pay at once for all my pains to come.

Ber. Unthrifts will starve if we before-hand give: [*Pulling back her hand.*]
I'le see you shall have just enough to live.

Enter Erotion.

Ero. Madam, the Emperour is drawing near;
And comes, they say, to seek *Porphyrius* here.

Ber. Alas!

Por. ——— I will not ask what he intends;
My life, or death, alone, on you depends.

Ber. I must withdraw; but must not let him know *Aside.*
How hard the precepts of my Vertue grow!
But what e're Fortune is for me design'd,
Sweet Heav'n, be still to brave *Porphyrius* kind! *Exit cum Erotio.*

Por. She's gone unkindly, and refus'd to cast
One glance to feed me for so long a fast.

Enter

Enter Maximin, Placidius, *Guards.*

Max. Porphyrius, since the Gods have ravish'd one,
I come in you to seek another Son.
Succeed him then in my Imperial state;
Succeed in all, but his untimely fate.
If I adopt you with no better grace,
Pardon a fathers tears, upon my face,
And give'em to *Charinus* memory:
May they not prove as ominous to thee.

Por. With what misfortunes Heav'n torments me still!
Why must I be oblig'd to one so ill? [*Aside.*

Max. Those offers which I made you, Sir, were such,
No private man should need to ballance much.

Por. Who durst his thoughts to such ambition lift? [*Kneeling.*
The greatness of it made me doubt the gift.
The distance was so vast, that to my view
It made the object seem at first untrue;
And now 'tis near, the sudden excellence
Strikes through, and flashes on my tender sence.

Max. Yet Heav'n and Earth, which so remote appear [*raising him.*]
Are by the Air, which flows betwixt'em, near.
And 'twixt us two my Daughter be the chain,
One end with me, and one with you remain.

Por. You press me down with such a glorious Fate, [*Kneeling again.*]
I cannot rise against the mighty weight.
Permit I may retire some little space,
And gather strength to bear so great a grace. [*Exit bowing.*

Placid. How Love and Fortune lavishly contend,
Which shoud *Porphyrius* wishes most befriend!
The midstream's his; I, creeping by the side,
Am shoulder'd off by his impetuous Tide. [*Aside.*

Enter Valerius *hastily.*

Val. I hope my business may my haste excuse;
For, Sir, I bring you most surprizing news.

The

The Christian Princess in her Tent confers
With fifty of your learn'd Philosophers;
Whom with such Eloquence she does perswade,
That they are Captives to her reasons made.
I left 'em yielding up their vanquish'd cause,
And all the Souldiers shouting her applause;
Ev'n *Apollonius* does but faintly speak,
Whose voice the murmurs of th' assistants break.

Max. Conduct this Captive Christian to my Tent;
She shall be brought to speedy punishment.
I must in time some remedy provide, [*Exit* Valerius.
Lest this contagious Errour spread too wide.

Placid. T' infected zeal you must no mercy show:
For, from Religion, all Rebellions grow.

Max. The silly crowd, by factious Teachers, brought
To think that Faith untrue their youth was taught,
Run on in new Opinions blindly bold;
Neglect, contemn, and then assault the old.
Th' infectious madness seizes every part,
And from the head distils upon the heart.
And first they think their Princes faith not true,
And then proceed to offer him a new;
Which if refus'd, all duty from 'em cast,
To their new Faith they make new Kings at last.

Placid. Those ills by Male-contents are often wrought,
That by their Prince their duty may be bought.
They head those holy Factions which they hate,
To sell their duty at a dearer rate.
But, Sir, the Tribune is already here
With your fair Captive.

Max. ——— Bid 'em both appear.

Enter S. Catharine, Valerius, Apollonius, *Guards.*

See where she comes with that high Air and meen,
Which marks, in bonds, the greatness of a Queen.
What pity 'tis! ——but I no charms must see
In her who to our Gods is enemy. ———

Fair

Fair foe of Heav'n, whence comes this haughty pride, [*To her.*
Or is it Frenzy does your mind misguide
To scorn our Worship, and new Gods to find?
S. Cath. Nor pride nor frenzy, but a setled mind;
Enlightned from above, my way does mark.
Max. Though Heav'n be clear, the way to it is dark.
S. Cath. But where our Reason with our Faith does go,
We're both above enlightned, and below.
But Reason with your fond Religion fights,
For many Gods are many Infinites:
This to the first Philosophers was known,
Who, under various names, ador'd but one.
Though your vain Poets after did mistake,
Who ev'ry Attribute a God did make.
And so obscene their Ceremonies be,
As good men loath, and *Cato* blush'd to see.
Max. War is my Province; Priest, why stand you mute?
You gain by Heav'n, and therefore should dispute.
Apol. In all Religions, as in ours, there are
Some solid truths, and some things popular.
The popular in pleasing Fables lye,
The truths, in precepts of Morality.
And these to humane life are of that use,
That no Religion can such Rules produce.
S. Cath. Then let the whole Dispute concluded be
Betwixt these Rules and Christianity.
Apol. And what more noble can your Doctrine preach,
Than Vertues which Philosophy does teach?
To keep the passions in severest awe,
To live to Reason (Nature's greatest Law)
To follow Vertue, as its own reward;
And good and ill, as things without, regard.
S. Cath. Yet few could follow those strict Rules they gave;
For humane life will humane frailties have;
And love of Vertue is but barren praise,
Airy as Fame: nor strong enough to raise
The actions of the Soul above the sence.
Vertue grows cold without a recompence.

We vertuous acts as duty do regard;
Yet are permitted to expect reward.

Apol. By how much more your Faith reward assures,
So much more frank our Virtue is than yours.

S. Cath. Blind men! you seek ev'n those rewards you blame:
But ours are solid, your's an empty name:
Either to open praise your Acts you guide,
Or else reward your selves with secret pride.

Apol. Yet still our Moral virtues you obey;
Ours are the Precepts though apply'd your way.

S. Cath. 'Tis true, your virtues are the same we teach;
But in our practice they much higher reach.
You but forbid to take anothers due;
But we forbid ev'n to desire it too.
Revenge of injuries you Virtue call;
But we forgiveness of our wrongs extoll:
Immodest deeds you hinder to be wrought,
But we proscribe the least immodest thought.
So much your Virtues are in ours refin'd,
That yours but reach the actions, ours the mind.

Max. Answer in short to what you heard her speak. [*To* Apol.

Apol. Where Truth prevails, all arguments are weak,
To that convincing power I must give place:
And with that Truth that Faith I will embrace.

Max. O Traytor to our Gods; but more to me;
Dar'st thou of any Faith but of thy Princes be?
But sure thou rav'st; thy foolish Errour find;
Cast up the poyson that infects thy mind;
And shun the Torments thou art sure to feel.

Apol. Nor fire, nor torture, nor revenging Steel
Can on my Soul the least impression make:
How gladly, Truth, I suffer for thy sake!
Once I was ignorant of what was so;
Bnt never can abandon Truth I know:
My Martyrdom I to thy Crown prefer;
Truth is a Cause for a Philosopher.

S. Cath. Lose not that Courage which Heav'n does inspire;
[*To* Apollonius.

But fearleſs go to be baptiz'd in fire.
Think 'tis a Triumph, not a danger near:
Give him your blood; but give him not a tear.
Go, and prepare my Seat: and hovering be
Near that bright ſpace which is reſerv'd for me.

Max. Hence with the Traytor; bear him to his Fate.

Apol. Tyrant, I fear thy pity, not thy hate:
A Life Eternal I by Death obtain.

Max. Go, carry him, where he that Life may gain.

Ex. Apollonius, Valerius, *and Guards.*

Placid. From this Enchantreſs all theſe ills are come:
You are not ſafe till you pronounce her doom.
Each hour ſhe lives a Legion ſweeps away;
She'll make your Army Martyrs in a day.

Max. 'Tis juſt: this Chriſtian Sorcereſs ſhall dy:
(Would I had never prov'd her Sorcery:)
Not that her charming Tongue this change has bred;
I fear 'tis ſomething that her Eyes have ſed.
I love: and am aſham'd it ſhould be ſeen. [*Aſide.*

Placid. Sir, ſhall ſhe dy?

Max. Conſider ſhe's a Queen.

Placid. Thoſe claims in *Cleopatra* ended were.

Max. How many *Cleopatra's* live in her! [*Aſide.*

Placid. When you condemn'd her, Sir, ſhe was a Queen.

Max. No, Slave; ſhe only was a Captive then.

S. *Cath.* My joyful Sentence you defer too long.

Max. I never knew that Life was ſuch a wrong.
But if you needs will dy: it ſhall be ſo.
—Yet think it does from your perverſneſs flow.
Men ſay, indeed, that I in Blood delight;
But you ſhall find — Haſte, take her from my ſight.
—For *Maximin* I have too much confeſt:
And for a Lover not enough expreſt.
Abſent, I may her Martyrdom decree;
But one look more will make that Martyr me. [*Exit S.* Catharine

Placid. What is it Sir, that ſhakes your mighty mind? *Guarded.*]

Max. Somewhat I am aſham'd that thou ſhouldſt find.

Placid. If it be Love which does your Soul poſſeſs ——

Max. Are you my Rival that ſo ſoon you gueſs? *Placid.*

Placid. Far, mighty Prince, be such a crime from me.
Which, with the pride, includes impiety.
Could you forgive it, yet the Gods above
Would never pardon me a Christian Love.

Max. Thou ly'st: —— there's not a God inhabits there,
But for this Christian would all Heav'n forswear,
Ev'n *Jove* would try more shapes her Love to win:
And in new birds, and unknown beasts would sin:
At least, if *Jove* could love like *Maximin*.

Placid. A Captive, Sir, who would a Martyr dye?

Max. She courts not death, but shuns Captivity.
Great gifts, and greater promises I'le make;
And what Religion is't, but they can shake?
She shall live high: ——Devotion in distress
Is born, but vanishes in happiness *Exit* Maximin.

Placid. solus. His Son forgot, his Empress unappeas'd;
How soon the Tyrant with new Love is seiz'd!
Love various minds does variously inspire:
He stirs in gentle Natures gentle fire;
Like that of Incense on the Altars laid:
But raging flames tempestuous Souls invade.
A fire which every windy passion blows;
With pride it mounts, and with revenge it glows.
But I accurs'd, who servilely must move;
And sooth his passion for his Daughters Love!
Smal hope, 'tis true, attends my mighty care.
But of all passions Love does last despair. *Exit.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

The Royal Pavilion.

Maximin, Placidius, *Guards and Attendants.*

Max. THis Love that never could my youth engage,
Peeps out his coward head to dare my age.
Where hast thou been thus long, thou sleeping form,

That wak'st like drowsie Sea-men in a storm?
A sullen hour thou chusest for thy birth:
My Love shoots up in tempests, as the Earth
Is stirr'd and loosen'd in a blust'ring wind,
Whose blasts to waiting flowers her womb unbind.

Placid. Forgive me, if I say your passions are
So rough, as if in Love you would make War.
But Love is soft——
And with soft beauty tenderly complies;
In lips it laughs, and languishes in eyes.

Max. There let it laugh; or, like an Infant, weep:
I cannot such a supple passion keep.
Mine, stiff with age, and stubborn as my arms,
Walks upright; stoops not to, but meets her charms.

Placid. Yet fierceness suits not with her gentle kind;
They brave assaults; but may be undermin'd.

Max. Till I in those mean Arts am better read,
Court thou, and fawn, and flatter in my stead.

Enter S. Catharine.

She comes; and now, methinks, I could obey:
Her form glides through me, and my heart gives way:
This Iron heart, which no impression took
From Wars, melts down, and runs, if she but look.

Exit Maximin.

Placid. Madam, I from the Emperour am come
T'applaude your Vertue, and reverse your doom.
He thinks, whatever your Religion be,
This Palm is owing to your constancy.

S. *Cath.* My constancy from him seeks no renown;
Heav'n, that propos'd the course, will give the Crown.

Placid. But Monarchs are the Gods Vicegerents here;
Heav'n gives rewards; but what it gives they bear:
From Heav'n to you th' Ægyptian Crown is sent,
Yet 'tis a Prince who does the gift present.

S. *Cath.* The Deity I serve, had he thought fit,
Could have preserv'd my Crown unconquer'd yet:
But when his secret Providence design'd

To level that, he levell'd too my mind;
Which, by contracting its desires, is taught
The humble quiet of possessing nought.

Placid. To Stoicks leave a happiness so mean:
Your Vertue does deserve a nobler Scene.
You are not for obscurity design'd:
But, like the Sun, must cheer all humane kind.

S. *Cath.* No happiness can be where is no rest:
Th' unknown, untalk'd of man is only blest.
He, as in some safe Cliff, his Cell does keep,
From thence he views the labours of the Deep:
The Gold-fraught Vessel which mad tempests beat,
He sees now vainly make to his retreat:
And, when from far, the tenth wave does appear,
Shrinks up in silent joy, that he's not there.

Placid. You have a Pilot who your Ship secures;
The Monarch both of Earth and Seas is yours.
He who so freely gives a Crown away,
Yet asks no tribute but what you may pay.
One smile on him a greater wealth bestows,
Than *Ægypt* yields, when *Nilus* overflows.

S. *Cath.* I cannot wholly innocent appear,
Since I have liv'd such words as these to hear.
O Heav'n, which dost of chastity take care! ——

Placid. Why do you lose an unregarded pray'r?
If happiness, as you believe, be rest,
That quiet sure is by the Gods possest: ——
'Tis greatness to neglect, or not to know
The little business of the world below.

S. *Cath.* This doctrine well befitted him who thought
A casual world was from wild Atoms wrought:
But such an order in each chance we see,
(Chain'd to its cause, as that to its decree,)
That none can think a workmanship so rare,
Was built or kept without a Workman's care.

To them Maximin, *Attendants, and Guards.*

Max. Madam, you from *Placidius* may have heard
Some news, which will your happiness regard.

For

For what a greater happiness can be
Than to be courted, and be lov'd by me?
Th' Ægyptian Crown I to your hands remit;
And, with it, take his heart who offers it. *She turns Aside.*
Do you my person and my gift contemn?

S. *Cath.* My hopes pursue a brighter Diadem.

Max. Can any brighter than the Roman be?
I find my proffer'd Love has cheapned me:
Since you neglect to answer my desires,
Know, Princess, you shall burn in other fires.
——— Why should you urge me to so black a deed?
Think all my anger did from Love proceed.

S. *Cath.* Nor threats nor promises my mind can move:
Your furious anger, nor your impious Love.

Max. The Love of you can never impious be;
You are so pure ———
That in the Act 'twould change th' impiety.
Heav'n would unmake it sin ———

S. *Cath.* I take my self from thy detested sight:
To my respect thou hast no longer right:
Such pow'r in bonds true piety can have,
That I command, and thou art but a Slave. *Exit S. Cath.*

Max. To what a height of arrogance she swells!
Pride or ill nature still with Vertue dwells;
Her death shall set me free this very hour;
——— But is her death within a Lovers pow'r?
Wild with my rage, more wild with my desire,
Like meeting tides ——— but mine are tides of fire.
What petty promise was't that caus'd this frown?

Placid. You heard: no less than the Ægyptian Crown.

Max. Throw *Ægypt's* by, and offer in the stead;
Offer ——— the Crown on *Berenice's* head.
I am resolv'd to double till I win;
About it straight, and send *Porphyrius* in. *Exit* Placid.
We look like Eagles tow'ring in the Sky;
While her high flight still raises mine more high.
To him Porphyrius.

Por. I come, Sir, to expect your great commands.

Max.

Max. My happineſs lyes only in thy hands.
And, ſince I have adopted thee my Son,
I'le keep no ſecret from thy breaſt unknown;
Led by the int'reſt of my riſing Fate,
I did eſpouſe this Empreſs whom I hate:
And therefore with leſs ſhame I may declare,
That I the Fetters of thy Captive wear.

Por. Sir, you amaze me with ſo ſtrange a Love.

Max. Pity, my Son, thoſe flames you diſapprove.
The cauſe of Love can never be aſſign'd;
'Tis in no face, but in the Lover's mind.

Por. Yet there are Beauties which attract all hearts;
And all mankind lyes open to their darts:
Whoſe Soveraignty, without diſpute, we grant;
Such Graces, ſure, your Empreſs does not want.

Max. Beauty has bounds,——
And can no more to every heart be ſo,
Than any Coin through every Land can go.
Some ſecret Grace, which is but ſo to me,
Though not ſo great, may yet more pow'rful be:
All guard themſelves when ſtronger Foes invade;
Yet, by the weak, ſurprizes may be made:
But you, my Son, are not to judge, but aid.

Por. What is it, Sir, you can require of me?

Max. I would from *Berenice's* bonds be free:
This yoke of Marriage from us both remove,
Where two are bound to draw, though neither love.

Por. Neither the Gods nor man will give conſent
To put in practice your unjuſt intent.

Max. Both muſt conſent to that which I decree.

Por. The Souldiers love her Brother's memory;
And for her ſake ſome Mutiny will ſtir.

Max. Our parting therefore — ſhall be ſought by her.
Go, bid her ſue for a Divorce, or dye;
I'le cut the knot, if ſhe will not untye:
Haſte to prepare her, and thy ſelf return;
Thy *Hymen's* Torch this day with mine ſhall burn. *Exit.*

Por. Rather my Funeral-torch; — for though I know

Valeria's

Valeria's fair, and that she loves me too.
'Gainst her my Soul is arm'd on every part:
Yet there are secret Rivets to my heart;
Where *Berenice's* Charms have found the way;
Subtile as Lightnings, but more fierce than they.
How shall I this avoid, or gain that Love!
So neer the Rock I, to the Port, must move.

To him Valeria *attended.*

Val. Porphyrius, now my joy I may express,
Nor longer hide the Love I must possess.
Should I have stay'd till Marriage made us one,
You might have thought it was by duty done;
But of my heart I now a present make;
And give it you e're it be yours to take.
Accept it as when early fruit we send:
And let the rareness the small gift commend.

Por. Great Monarchs, like your Father, often give
What is above a Subject to receive:
But faithful Officers should countermand,
And stop the gift that passes through their hand:
And to their Prince, that mass of wealth restore,
Which lavish'd thus, would make whole Nations poor.

Val. But to this gift a double right you have:
My Father gives but what before I gave.

Por. In vain you such unequal presents make,
Which I still want capacity to take.
Such fatal bounty once the *Gaules* did show;
They threw their Rings, but threw their Targets too.
Bounty so plac'd, does more like ruine look;
You pour the Ocean on a narrow Brook.

Val. Yet, if your Love before prepares a Boat,
The stream so pour'd, drowns not, but makes it flout.

Por. But when the Vessel is on Quick-sands cast,
The flowing tide does more the sinking hast.

Val. And on what Quick-sands can your heart be thrown?
Can you a Love besides *Valeria*'s own?

Por. If he who at your feet his heart would lay,
Be met with first, and robb'd upon the way,

You

You may indeed the Robbers ſtrength accuſe,
But pardon him who did the Preſent loſe.

Val. Who is this Thief that does my right poſſeſs?
Name her, and then we of her ſtrength may gueſs.—
From whence does your unwonted ſilence come?

Por. She bound and gag'd me, and has left me dumb.

Val. But of my wrongs I will aloud complain:
Falſe man, thou would'ſt excuſe thy ſelf in vain:
For thee I did a Maidens bluſh forſake;
And own'd a Love thou haſt refus'd to take.

Por. Refus'd it! ——like a Miſer midſt his ſtore,
Who graſps and graſps, till he can hold no more;
And when his ſtrength is wanting to his mind,
Looks back, and ſighs on what he left behind.

Val. No, I reſume that heart thou didſt poſſeſs;
My Father ſhall my injuries redreſs:
With me thou loſeſt his Imperial Crown,
And ſpeedy death attends upon his frown.

Por. You may revenge your wrongs a nobler way;
Command my death, and I will ſoon obey.

Val. No, live; for on thy life my cure depends:
In Debters deaths all obligation ends:
'Twill be ſome eaſe Ungrateful thee to call;
And, Bankrupt-like, ſay, truſting him loſt all.

Por. Upbraided thus, what gen'rous man would live!
But fortune will revenge what you forgive.
When I refuſe, (as in few hours I muſt)
This offer'd grace, your Father will be juſt.

Val. Be juſt! ſay rather he will cruel prove,
To kill that only perſon I can love.
Yet ſo it is! ——
Your int'reſt in the Army is ſo high,
That he muſt make you his, or you muſt dye!
It is reſolv'd! who e're my Rival be, *Aſide after a pauſe.*
I'le ſhow that I deſerve him more than ſhe.
And if at laſt he does Ingrateful prove,
My conſtancy it ſelf rewards my Love. *Exit.*

Por. She's gone, and gazing round about, I ſee

Nothing but death, or glorious misery;
Here Empire ſtands, if I could Love diſplace;
There, hopeleſs Love, with more Imperial Grace:
Thus, as a ſinking Hero compaſs'd round,
Beckens his braveſt Foe for his laſt wound,
And him into his part of Fame does call,
I'le turn my face to Love, and there I'le fall.

To him Berenice, Erotion.

Ber. I come, *Porphyrius*, to congratulate
This happy change of your exalted Fate;
You to the Empire are, I hear, deſign'd;
And fair *Valeria* muſt th' Alliance bind.

Por. Would Heav'n had my ſucceſſion ſo decreed,
That I in all might *Maximin* ſucceed!
He offers me th' Imperial Crown, 'tis true:
I would ſucceed him, but it is in you.

Ber. In me! I never did accept your Love;
But You, I ſee, would handſomly remove:
And I can give you leave without a frown:
I always thought you merited a Crown.

Por. I never ſought that Crown but on your brow;
But you with ſuch indifference would allow
My change, that you have kill'd me with that breath:
I feel your ſcorn cold as the hand of death.

Ber. You'l come to life in your *Valeria's* arms;
'Tis true, I cannot boaſt of equal Charms;
Or if I could, I never did admit
Your Love to me, but only ſuffer it:
I am a Wife, and can make no return;
And 'twere but vain, in hopeleſs fires to burn.

Por. Unkind! can you whom only I adore,
Set open to your Slave the Priſon-door?
You uſe my heart juſtas you would afford
A fatal freedom to ſome harmleſs bird,
Whom, breeding, you ne're taught to ſeek its food;
And now let flye to periſh in the Wood.

Ber. Then, if you will love on, and diſobey,
And loſe an Empire for my ſake, you may.

Will a kind look from me pay all this score,
For you well know you must expect no more?

Por. All I deserve it will, not all I wish:
But I will brave the Tyrants rage, for this.
If I refuse, my death must needs ensue;
But you shall see that I dare dye for you.

Ber. Would you for me,
A Beauty, and an Empire too deny?
I love you now so well——that you shall dye,
Dye mine; 'tis all I can with honour give:
Nor should you dye, if after, I would live.
But when your Marriage and your Death I view,
That makes you false, but this will keep you true.

Por. Unbind thy brows, and look abroad to see,
O mighty Love, thy mightiest Victory!

Ber. And yet—is there no other way to try?
'Tis hard to say I love, and let you dye.

Por. Yes, there remains some help which you might give,
If you, as I would dye for Love, would live.

Ber. If death for Love be sweet, sure life is more:
Teach me the means your safety to restore.

Por. Your Tyrant the Ægyptian Princess loves;
And to that height his swelling passion moves,
That, fearing in your death the Souldiers force,
He from your bed does study a Divorce.

Ber. Th' Ægyptian Princess I disputing hard,
And as a Miracle her mind regard:
But yet I wish that this Divorce be true. *Gives her hand.*

Por. 'Tis, Madam, but it must be sought by you.
By this he will all Mutinies prevent;
And this, as well, secures your own content.

Ber. I hate this Tyrant, and his bed I loath;
But, once submitting, I am ty'd to both:
Ty'd to that Honour, which all Women owe,
Though not their Husbands person, yet their vow.
Something so sacred in that bond there is,
That none should think there could be ought amiss:
And if there be, we should in silence hide

Those faults, which blame our choice when they are spy'd.

Por. But, since to all the world his crimes are known,
And, by himself the Civil War's begun,
Would you th' advantage of the fight delay,
If, striking first, you were to win the day?

Ber. I would, like Jews upon their Sabbath fall:
And rather than strike first, not strike at all.

Por. Against your self you sadly prophesie:
You either this Divorce must seek, or dye.

Ber. Then death from all my griefs shall set me free.

Por. And would you rather chuse your death, than me?

Ber. My earthy part——
Which is my Tyrants right, death will remove,
I'le come all Soul and Spirit to your Love.
With silent steps I'le follow you all day;
Or else before you, in the Sun-beams, play.
I'le lead you thence to melancholy Groves,
And there repeat the Scenes of our past Loves.
At night, I will within your Curtains peep;
With empty arms embrace you while you sleep.
In gentle dreams I often will be by;
And sweep along, before your closing eye.
All dangers from your bed I will remove;
But guard it most from any future Love.
And when at last, in pity, you will dye:
I'le watch your Birth of Immortality:
Then, Turtle-like, I'le to my Mate repair;
And teach you your first flight in open Air.

Exit Berenice *cum* Erotio.

Por, She has but done what Honour did require:
Nor can I blame that Love, which I admire.
But then her death!
I'le stand betwixt, it first shall pierce my heart:
We will be stuck together on his dart.
But yet the danger not so high does grow:
I'le charge death first, perhaps repulse him too.
But, if o'repow'r'd, I must be overcome;
Fore'd back, I'le fight each inch into my Tomb. *Exit.*

ACT

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Indian Cave.

Placidius, Nigrinus. Nigrinus *With two drawn Swords, held upward in his hands.*

Placid. ALL other means have fail'd to move her heart;
Our last recourse is, therefore, to your Art.

Nig. Of Wars, and Bloodshed, and of dire Events,
Of Fates, and fighting Kings, their Instruments,
I could with greater certainty foretell;
Love only does in doubts and darkness dwell.
For, like a wind, it in no quarter stays;
But points and veers each hour a thousand ways.
On Women Love depends, and they on Will;
Chance turns their Orb while Destiny sits still.

Placid. Leave nothing unattempted in your pow'r:
Remember you oblige an Emperour.

Nig. An earthy Fiend by compact me obeys;
But him to light intents I must not raise.
Some Astral forms I must invoke by pray'r,
Fram'd all of purest Atoms of the Air;
Not in their Natures simply good or ill;
But most subservient to bad Spirits will.
Nakar of these does lead the mighty Band,
For eighty Legions move at his Command:
Gentle to all, but, far above the rest,
Mild *Nakar* loves his soft *Damilcar* best.
In Aery Chariots they together ride;
And sip the dew as through the Clouds they glide:
These are the Spirits which in Love have pow'r.

Placid. Haste, and invoke 'em in a happy hour.

Nig. And so it proves: for, counting fev'n from Noon,
'Tis *Venus* hour, and in the wexing Moon.

With

With Chalk I first describe a Circle here,
Where these Ætherial Spirits must appear.
Come in, come in; for here they will be strait;
Around, around, the place I fumigate:
My fumigation is to *Venus*, just:
The Souls of Roses, and red Corals dust:
A lump of *Sperma Ceti*; and to these
The stalks and chips of *Lignum Aloes*.
And, last, to make my fumigation good,
'Tis mixt with Sparrows brains, and Pigeons blood.

Nigrinus *takes up the Swords.*

They come, they come, they come! I hear 'em now:

Placid. A death-like damp sits cold upon my brow
And misty vapours swim before my sight.

Nig. They come not in a shape to cause your fright.

Nakar *and* Damilcar *descend in Clouds, and sing.*

Nakar. *Hark, my* Damilcar, *we are call'd below!*

Dam. *Let us go, let us go!*
Go to relieve the care
Of longing Lovers in despair!

Nakar. *Merry, merry, merry, we sail from the East*
Half tippled at a Rain-bow Feast.

Dam. *In the bright Moon-shine while winds whistle loud,*
Tivy, tivy, tivy, we mount and we fly,
All racking along in a downy white Cloud:
And lest our leap from the Skie should prove too far,
We slide on the back of a new-falling Star.

Nakar. *And drop from above,*
In a Gelly of Love!

Dam. *But now the Sun's down, and the Element's red,*
The Spirits of Fire against us make head!

Nakar. *They muster, they muster, like Gnats in the Air:*
Alas! I must leave thee, my Fair;
And to my light Horse-men repair.

Dam. *O stay, for you need not to fear 'em to night;*
The wind is for us, and blows full in their sight:
And o'er the wide Ocean we fight!
Like leaves in the Autumn our Foes will fall down;
And hiss in the Water ——

Both.

Both. *And hiss in the Water and drown!*
Nakar. *But their men lye securely intrench'd in a Cloud:*
And a Trumpeter-Hornet to battel sounds loud.
Dam. *Now Mortals that spie*
How we tilt in the Skie
With wonder will gaze;
And fear such events as will ne're come to pass!
Nakar. *Stay you to perform what the man will have done.*
Dam. *Then call me again when the Battel is won.*
Both. *So ready and quick is a Spirit of Air*
To pity the Lover, and succour the fair,
That, silent and swift, the little soft God
Is here with a wish, and is gone with a nod.

The Clouds part, Nakar *flies up, and* Damilcar *down.*

Nig. I charge thee, Spirit, stay; and by the pow'r [*To* Damilcar.]
Of *Nakar's* Love, and of this holy Wand
On the North quarter of my Circle stand:
(Sev'n foot around for my defence I take.)
To all my questions faithful answers make,
So may'st thou live thy thousand years in peace;
And see thy Aery progeny increase:
So may'st thou still continue young and fair,
Fed by the blast of pure Ætherial Air.
And, thy full term expir'd, without all pain.
Dissolve into thy Astral source again.
Dam. Name not my hated Rival *Gemaya*,
And I'le speak true whate're thy questions be.
Nig. Thy Rivals hated name I will refrain:
Speak, shall the Emperour his love obtain?
Dam. Few hours shall pass before your Emperour shall be
Possess'd of that he loves, or from that love be free.
Placid. Shall I enjoy that Beauty I adore?
Dam. She Suppliant-like, e're long, thy succour shall implore:
And thou with her thou lov'st in happiness may'st live:
If she not dies before, who all thy joys can give.
Nig. Say, what does the Ægyptian Princess now?
Dam. A gentle slumber sits upon her brow,
Nig. Go, stand before her in a golden dream:

Set all the pleasures of the world to show,
And in vain joys let her loose spirit flow.

Dam. Twice fifty Tents remove her from your sight,
But I'll cut through e'm all with rays of light:
And covering other objects to your eyes,
Show where intranc'd in silent sleep she lies.

Damilcar *stamps, and the Bed arises with* S. Catharine *in it.*

Dam. singing. *You pleasing dreams of Love and sweet delight,*
Appear before this slumbring Virgins sight:
Soft visions set her free
From mournful piety.
Let her sad thoughts from Heav'n retire;
And let the Melancholy Love
Of those remoter joys above
Give place to your more sprightly fire.
Let purling streams be in her fancy seen;
And flowry Meads, and Vales of chearful green:
And in the midst of deathless Groves
Soft sighing wishes lye,
And smiling hopes fast by,
And just beyond e'm ever laughing Love.

A Scene of a Paradise is discovered.

Placid. Some pleasing objects do her mind employ;
For on her face I read a wandring Joy.

SONG.

Dam. *Ah how sweet it is to love,*
Ah how gay is young desire!
And what pleasing pains we prove
When we first approach Loves fire!
Pains of Love, be sweeter far
Than all other pleasures are.

Sighs which are from Lovers blown,
Do but gently heave the Heart:

Ev'n

Ev'n the tears they shed alone
Cure, like trickling Balm their smart.
Lovers when they lose their breath,
Bleed away in easie death.

Love and Time with reverence use,
Treat 'em like a parting friend:
Nor the golden gifts refuse
Which in youth sincere they send:
For each year their price is more,
And they less simple than before.

Love, like Spring-tides full and high,
Swells in every youthful vein:
But each Tide does less supply,
Till they quite shrink in again:
If a flow in Age appear,
'Tis but rain, and runs not clear.

At the end of the Song a Dance of Spirits. After which Amariel, *the Guardian-Angel of S.* Catharine, *descends to soft Musick, with a flaming Sword. The Spirits crawl off the Stage amazedly, and* Damilcar *runs to a corner of it.*

Amar. From the bright Empire of Eternal day,
Where waiting minds for Heav'ns Commission stay,
Amariel flies: (a darted Mandate came
From that great will which moves this mighty Frame,
Bid me to thee, my Royal charge, repair,
To guard thee from the Dæmons of the Air;
My flaming Sword above 'em to display,
(All keen and ground upon the edge of day;)
The flat to sweep the Vrions from thy mind,
The edge to cut 'em through that stay behind.)
Vain Spirits, you that shunning Heav'ns high noon,
Swarm here beneath the concave of the Moon,
What folly, or what rage your duty blinds,
To violate the sleep of holy minds?

Hence, to the task assign'd you here below:
Upon the Ocean make loud Tempests blow:
Into the wombs of hollow Clouds repair,
And crush out Thunder from the bladder'd Air.
From pointed Sun-beams take the Mists they drew,
And scatter 'em again in pearly dew:
And of the bigger drops they drain below,
Some mould in Hail, and others stamp in Snow.

Dam. Mercy, bright Spirit, I already feel
The piercing edge of thy immortal steel:
Thou, Prince of day, from Elements Art free;
And I all body when compar'd to thee.
Thou tread'st th' Abyss of light!
And where it streams with open eyes canst go:
We wander in the Fields of Air below:
Changlings and Fooles of Heav'n: and thence shut out,
Wildly we roam in discontent about:
Gross-heavy-fed, next man in ignorance and sin,
And spotted all without; and dusky all within.
Without thy Sword I perish by thy sight,
I reel, and stagger, and am drunk with light.

Ama. If e're again thou on this place art found,
Full fifty years I'le chain thee under ground;
The damps of Earth shall be thy daily food;
All swoln and bloated like a dungeon toad:
And when thou shalt be freed, yet thou shalt ly
Gasping upon the ground, too faint to fly;
And lag below thy fellows in the sky.

Dam. O pardon, pardon this accursed deed,
And I no more on Magick fumes will feed;
Which drew me hither by their pow'rful steams.

Ama. to S. Cath. Go expiate thy guilt in holy dreams. [*Ex.* Dam.
But thou, sweet Saint, henceforth disturb'd no more
With dreams not thine, thy thoughts to Heav'n restore.

The Angel ascends, and the Scene shuts.

Nig. Some holy Being does invade this place,
And from their duty does my Spirits chase.
I dare no longer near it make abode:

No

No Charms prevail againſt the Chriſtians God, *Exit.*

Placid. How doubtfully theſe Spectres Fate foretell!
In double ſenſe, and twi-light truth they dwell:
Like fawning Courtiers for ſucceſs they wait,
And then come ſmiling and declare for Fate.

Enter Maximin *and* Porphyrius, *attended by* Valerius *and Guards.*

But ſee, the Tyrant and my Rival come:
I, like the Fiends, will flatter in his doom:
None but a Fool diſtaſtful truth will tell,
So it be new and pleaſe, 'tis full as well.
Placid. *whiſpers with the Emperour who ſeems pleas'd.*
Max. You charm me with your news, which I le reward:
By hopes we are for coming joys prepar'd:
Poſſeſs her Love, or from that Love be free ——
Heav'n ſpeaks me fair: if ſhe as kind can prove,
I ſhall poſſeſs, but never quit my Love.
Go, tell me when ſhe wakes—— *Exit* Placidius.
Porphyrius *ſeems to beg ſomething of him.*
——————*Porphyrius*, no;
She has refus'd, and I will keep my vow.
Por. For your own ſake your cruel vow defer;
The time's unſafe, your Enemies are near.
And to diſpleaſe your men when they ſhould fight——
Max. My looks alone my Enemies will fright;
And o're my men I'le ſet my careful Spies,
To watch Rebellion in their very eyes.
No more, I cannot bear the leaſt reply.
Por. Yet, Tyrant, thou ſhalt periſh e're ſhe dye. *Aſide.*

Enter Valeria.

Valeria here! how Fortune treats me ſtill
With various harms, magnificently ill!
Max. Valeria, I was ſending to your Tent, *To Valeria.*
But my Commands your preſence does prevent.

This is the hour, wherein the Priest shall joyn
Your holy Loves, and make *Porphyrius* mine.

Val. aside. Now hold, my Heart, and *Venus* I implore,
Be Judge if she he loves deserves him more.

Por. aside. Past hope! and all in vain I would preserve
My life, not for my self, but her I serve.

Val. I come, great Sir, your justice to demand. *To the Emp.*

Max. You cannot doubt it from a Fathers hand.

Por. Sir, I confess before her Suit be known;
And, by my self condemn'd, my crime I own.
I have refus'd———

Val. ———Peace, peace, while I confess
I have refus'd thee for unworthiness.

Por. I am amaz'd.

Max. ———What Riddles do you use?
Dare either of you my Commands refuse?

Val. Yes, I dare owne how e're 'twas wisely done
T' adopt so mean a person for your Son:
So low you should not for your Daughter chuse:
And therefore, Sir, this Marriage I refuse.

Max. You lik'd the choice when first I thought it fit.

Val. I had not then enough consider'd it.———

Max. And you have now consider'd it too much:
Secrets of Empire are not safe to touch.

Por. Let not your mighty anger rise too high;
'Tis not *Valeria* merits it, but I.
My own unworthiness so well I knew,
That from her Love I consciously withdrew.

Val. Thus rather than endure the little shame
To be refus'd, you blast a Virgins name.
You to refuse, and I to be deny'd!
Learn more discretion, or be taught less pride.

Por. O Heav'n, in what a Labyrinth am I led!
I could get out, but she detains the thred!
Now I must wander on till I can see,
Whether her pity or revenge it be! *Aside.*

Max. With what childs anger do you think you play?
I'le punish both, if either disobey.

Val.

Val. Since all the fault was mine, I am content
Porphyrius should not share the punishment.

Por. Blind that I was till now, that could not see,
'Twas all th' effect of generosity.
She loves me, ev'n to suffer for my sake;
And on her self would my refusal take.

Aside.

Max. Children to serve their Parents int'rest, live. *To Val.*
Take heed what doom against your self you give.

Por. Since she must suffer, if I do not speak,
'Tis time the Laws of Decency to break.
She told me, Sir, that she your choice approv'd:
And (though I blush to owne it) said she lov'd.
Lov'd me desertless, who, with shame, confest
Another flame had seiz'd upon my brest.
Which when, too late, the generous Princess knew.
And fear'd your justice would my crime pursue,
Upon her self she makes the Tempests fall,
And my refusal her contempt would call.

Val. He raves, Sir, and to cover my disdain,
Unhandsomly would his denial feign.
And all means failing him, at last would try
T' usurp the credit of a scorn, and dye.
But——let him live: —— his punishment shall be
The grief his pride will bring for losing me.

Max. You both obnoxious to my justice are;
And, Daughter, you have not deserv'd my care.
'Tis my Command you strictly guarded be,
Till your fantastick quarrel you agree.

Por. Sir——

Max. I'le not hear you speak, her crime is plain,
She owns her pride, which you perhaps may feign.
She shall be Prisoner till she bend her mind
To that which is for both of you design'd.

Val. You'l find it hard my free-born will to bound.

Max. I'le find that pow'r o're wills which Heav'n ne're found.
Free will's a cheat in any one but me;
In all but Kings 'tis willing slavery.
An unseen Fate which forces the desire:

The will of Puppets danc'd upon a wyre.
A Monarch is
The Spirit of the World in every mind;
He may match Wolves to lambs, and make it kind.
Mine is the business of your little Fates:
And though you war, like petty wrangling States,
You 're in my hand; when I bid you cease,
You shall be crush'd together into peace.

Val. Aside. Thus by the world my courage will be priz'd;
Seeming to scorn, who am, alas, despis'd:
Dying for Love's, fulfilling Honour's Laws;
A secret Martyr while I owne no cause. *Exit* Valeria.

Max. Porphyrius, stay; there's something I would hear:
You said you lov'd, and you must tell me where.

Por. All Heav'n is to my sole destruction bent. *Aside.*

Max. You would, it seems, have leisure to invent.

Por. Her name in pity, Sir, I must forbear,
Lest my offences you revenge on her.

Max. My promise for her life I do engage.

Por. Will that, Sir, be remember'd in your rage?

Max. Speak, or your silence more my rage will move;
'Twill argue that you rival me in Love.

Por. Can you believe that my ambitious flame
Should mount so high as *Berenice's* name?

Max. Your guilt dares not approach what it would hide;
But draws me off, and (Lapwing-like) flies wide.
'Tis not my Wife, but Mistress you adore:
Though that affronts, yet this offends me more.
Who courts my Wife——
Does to my Honour more injurious prove;
But he who courts my Mistress, wrongs my Love.

Por. Th' Egyptian Princess ne're could move my heart.

Max. You could not perish by a nobler Dart.

Por. Sir, I presume not beauties to compare;
But in my eye, my Princess is as fair.

Max. Your Princess! then it seems, though you deny
Her name you love, you owne her quality.

Por. Though not by Birth or Title so; yet she

Who

Who rules my heart, a Princess is to me.

Max. No, no———

'Tis plain that word you unawares did use,
And told a truth which now you would excuse.
Besides my Wife and Mistress, here are none
Who can the Title of a Princess owne.

Por. There is one more———
You Daughter, Sir: let that your doubt remove.

Max. But she is not that Princess whom you love.

Por. I nam'd not Love, though it might doubtful seem;
She's fair; and is that Princess I esteem.

Max. Go, and to passion your esteem improve,
While I command her to receive your Love. *Exit Por.*

Enter S. Catharine.

S. *Cath.* I come not now, as Captive to your pow'r,
To beg; but as high Heav'ns Embassadour,
The Laws of my Religion to fulfil:
Heav'n sends me to return you good for ill.
Your Empress to your Love I would restore;
And to your mind the peace it had before.

Max. While in anothers name you Peace declare,
Princess, you in your own proclaim a War.
Your too great pow'r does your design oppose;
You make those breaches which you strive to close.

S. *Cath.* That little beauty which too much you prize
Seeks not to move your heart, or draw your eyes:
Your Love to *Berenice* is due alone:
Love, like that pow'r which I adore, is one.
When fixt to one, it safe at Anchor rides,
And dares the fury of the winds and tides:
But losing once that hold, to the wide Ocean born,
It drives away at will, to every wave a scorn.

Max. If to new persons I my Love apply,
The Stars and Nature are in fault, not I:
My Loves are like my old Prætorian Bands,
Whose Arbitrary pow'r their Prince commands;

I can

I can no more make passion come or go,
Than you can bid your *Nile* ebb or flow.
'Tis lawless, and will love, and where it list:
And that's no sin which no man can resist:
Those who impute it to me as a crime,
Would make a God of me before my time.

S. Cath. A God, indeed, after the Roman style,
An Eagle mounting from a kindled Pile:
But you may make your self a God below:
For Kings who rule their own desires are so.
You roam about, and never are at rest;
By new desires, that is, new torments, still possest.
Qualmish and loathing all you had before:
Yet with a sickly appetite to more.
As in a fev'rish dream you still drink on;
And wonder why your thirst is never gone.
Love, like a ghostly Vision haunts your mind;
'Tis still before you what you left behind.

Max. How can I help those faults which Nature made?
My appetite is sickly and decay'd,
And you forbid me change (the sick mans ease)
Who cannot cure, must humour his disease.

S. Cath. Your mind should first the remedy begin;
You seek without, the Cure that is within.
The vain experiments you make each day,
To find content, still finding it decay,
Without attempting more, should let you see
That you have sought it where it never could be.
But when you place your joys on things above,
You fix the wand'ring Planet of your Love:
Thence you may see
Poor humane kind all dazz'd in open day,
Erre after bliss, and blindly miss their way:
The greatest happiness a Prince can know,
Is to love Heav'n above, do good below.

To them Berenice *and Attendants.*

Ber. That happiness may *Berenice* find,
Leaving these empty joys of Earth behind:

And

And this frail Being, where so short a while
Th' unfortunate lament, and prosp'rous smile.
Yet a few days, and those which now appear
In youth and beauty like the blooming year,
In life's swift Scene shall change; and cares shall come,
And heavy age, and death's relentless doom.

S. Cath. Yet man, by pleasures seeks that Fate which he would shun;
And, suck'd in by the stream, does to the Whirl-pool run.

Max. How, Madam, are you to new ways inclin'd? To *Ber.*
I fear the Christian Sect perverts your mind.

Ber. Yes, Tyrant, know that I their Faith embrace,
And owne it in the midst of my disgrace.
That Faith, which abject as it seems to thee,
Is nobler than thy Purple Pageantry;
A Faith, which still with Nature is at strife;
And looks beyond it to a future life.
A Faith which vitious Souls abhor and fear,
Because it shows Eternity too near.
And therefore every one
With seeming scorn of it the rest deceives;
All joyning not to owne what each believes.

S. Cath. O happy Queen! whom pow'r leads not astray,
Nor youth's more pow'rful blandishments betray.

Ber. Your Arguments my reason first inclin'd,
And then your bright example fix'd my mind.

Max. With what a holy Empress am I blest,
What scorn of Earth dwells in her heav'nly breast!
My Crown's too mean; but he whom you adore,
Has one more bright, of Martyrdom in store.
She dyes, and I am from the envy freed; *Aside.*
She has, I thank her, her own death decreed.
No Souldier, now, will in her rescue stir;
Her death is but in complaisance to her.
I'le haste to gratifie her holy will;
Heav'n grant her zeal may but continue still.

To Val. Tribune, a Guard to seize the Empress strait,
Secure her Person Pris'ner to the State. *Exit* Maximus.

Val. going to her. Madam, believe 'tis with regret I come

To execute my angry Prince's doom.

Enter Porphyrius.

Por. What is it I behold! Tribune, from whence
Proceeds this more than barbarous insolence?

Val. Sir, I perform the Emperour's Commands.

Por. Villain, hold off thy sacrilegious hands,
Or by the Gods——retire without reply:
And, if he asks who bid thee, say 'twas I.

Valerius *retires to a distance.*

Ber. Too generously your safety you expose
To save one moment her whom you must lose.

Por. 'Twixt you and death ten thousand lives there stand;
Have courage, Madam, the Prætorian Band
Will all oppose your Tyrants cruelty.

S. *Cath.* And I have Heav'n implor'd she may not dye.
As some to witness truth Heav'ns call obey;
So some on Earth must, to confirm it, stay.

Por. What Faith, what Witness is it that you name?

Ber. Knowing what she believes, my Faith's the same.

Por. How am I cross'd what way so e're I go!
To the unlucky every thing is so.
Now, Fortune, thou hast shown thy utmost spight:
The Souldiers will not for a Christian fight.
And, Madam, all that I can promise now,
Is but to dye before death reaches you.

Ber. Now death draws near, a strange perplexity
Creeps coldly on me, like a fear to dye:
Courage, uncertain dangers may abate;
But who can bear th' approach of certain Fate?

S *Cath.* The wisest and the best some fear may show;
And wish to stay, though they resolve to go.

Ber. As some faint Pilgrim standing on the shore,
First views the Torrent he would venture o're;
And then his Inn upon the farther ground,
Loth to wade through, and lother to go round:
Then dipping in his staff do's tryal make,

How

How deep it is; and, sighing, pulls it back:
Sometimes resolv'd to fetch his leap, and then
Runs to the Bank, but there stops short again;
So I at once ———
Both heav'nly Faith, and humane fear obey;
And feel before me in an unknown way.
For this blest Voyage I with joy prepare;
Yet am asham'd to be a stranger there.

S. Cath. You are not yet enough prepar'd to dye;
Earth hangs too heavy for your Soul to flye.

Por. One way (and Heav'n I hope inspires my mind)
I for your safety in this straight can find:
But this fair Queen must farther my intent.

S. Cath. Name any way your reason can invent.

Por. to Ber. Though your Religion (which I cannot blame,
Because my secret Soul avows the same)
Has made your life a forfeit to the Laws,
The Tyrant new-born passion is the cause.
Were this bright Princess once remov'd away,
Wanting the food, the flame would soon decay.
And I'le prepare a faithful Guard this night
T'attend her person, and secure her flight.

Ber. to S. Cath. By this way I shall both from death be freed,
And you unforc'd to any wicked deed.

S. Cath. Madam, my thoughts are with themselves at strife;
And Heav'n can witness how I prize your life:
But 'tis a doubtful conflict I must try
Betwixt my pity and my piety.
Staying, your precious life I must expose;
Going, my Crown of Martyrdom I lose.

Por. Your equal choice when Heav'n does thus divide,
You should, like Heav'n, still lean on mercy's side.

S. Cath. The will of Heav'n, judg'd by a private breast,
Is often what's our private interest:
And therefore those, who would that will obey,
Without their int'rest must their duty weigh.
As for my self, I do not life despise;
But as the greatest gift of Nature prize.

My Sex is weak, my fears of death are strong;
And whate're is, it's Being would prolong.
Were there no sting in death, for me to dye,
Would not be conquest, but stupidity.
But if vain Honour can confirm the Soul,
And sense of shame the fear of death controul,
How much more then should Faith uphold the mind,
Which, showing death, shows future life behind?

Ber. Of death's contempt Heroick proofs you give:
But, Madam, let my weaker Vertue live.
Your Faith may bid you, your own life resign;
But not when yours must be involv'd with mine.
Since, then, you do not think me fit to dye,
Ah, how can you that life I beg, deny!

S. Cath. Heav'n does in this my greatest tryal make,
When I for it, the care of you forsake.
But I am plac'd, as as on a Theatre,
Where all my Acts to all Mankind appear,
To imitate my constancy or fear
Then, Madam, judge what course I should pursue,
When I must either Heav'n forsake, or you.

Por. Were saving *Berenice*'s life a sin,
Heav'n had shut up your flight from *Maximin*. (found,

S. Cath. Thus, with short Plummets Heav'ns deep will we
That vast Abyss where humane Wit is drown'd!
In our small Skiff we must not launce too far;
We here but Coasters, not Discov'rers are.
Faith's necessary Rules are plain and few;
We, many, and those needless Rules pursue:
Faith from our hearts into our heads we drive;
And make Religion all Contemplative.
You, on Heav'ns will may witty glosses feign;
But that which I must practise here, is plain:
If the All great decree her life to spare,
He will, the means, without my crime prepare *Exit S.* Cath.

Por. Yet there is one way left? it is decreed
To save your life that *Maximin* shall bleed.
'Midst all his Guards I will his death pursue,

Or

Or fall a Sacrifice to Love and you.

Ber. So great a fear of death I have not shown,
That I would shed his blood to save my own.
My fear is but from humane frailty brought.
And never mingled with a wicked thought.

Por. 'Tis not a Crime, since one of you must dye;
Or is excus'd by the necessity.

Ber. I cannot to a Husband's death consent;
But, by revealing, will your crime prevent:
The horrour of this deed ——
Against the fear of death has arm'd my mind;
And now less guilt in him than you I find:
If I a Tyrant did detest before,
I hate a Rebel and a Traitor more:
Ungrateful man ——
Remember whose Successor thou art made,
And then thy Benefactors life invade.
Guards to your charge I give your Pris'ner back:
And will from none but Heav'n my safety take.

Exit with Valerius and Guards.

Por. solus. 'Tis true, what she has often urg'd before;
He's both my Father and my Emperour!
O Honour, how can'st thou invent a way
To save my Queen, and not my trust betray!
Unhappy I that e're he trusted me!
As well his Guardian Angel may his Murd'rer be.
And yet —— let Honour, Faith, and Vertue dye,
But let not Love in *Berenice* dye.
She lives! ——
That's put beyond dispute, as firm as Fate:
Honour and Faith let Argument debate.

Enter Maximin *and* Valerius *talking, and Guards.*

Max. 'Tis said; but I am loth to think it true, *To* Porph.
That my late Orders were contemn'd by you:
That *Berenice* from her Guards you freed.

Por. I did it, and I glory in the deed.

Max.

Max. How, glory my Commands to disobey!

Por. When those Commands would your Renown betray.

Max. Who should be Judge of that Renown you name!
But I?

Por. ——Yes I, and all who love your fame.

Max. Porphyrius, your replies are insolent.

Por. Sir, they are just, and for your service meant.
If, for Religion you our lives will take;
You do not the offenders find, but make.
All Faiths are to their own believers just;
For none believe, because they will, but must.
Faith is a force from which there's no defence;
Because the Reason it does first convince.
And Reason Conscience into fetters brings;
And Conscience is without the pow'r of Kings.

Max. Then Conscience is a greater Prince than I:
At whose each erring call a King may dye.
Who conscience leaves to its own free command,
Puts the worst Weapon in a Rebels hand.

Por. It's Empire, therefore Sir, should bounded be;
And but in acts of it's Religion, free:
Those who ask Civil pow'r and Conscience too,
Their Monarch to his own destruction woo.
With needful Arms let him secure his peace;
Then, that wild beast he safely may release.

Max. I can forgive these liberties you take,
While but my Counsellor your self you make:
But you first act your sense, and then advise:
That is, at my expence you will be wise. ——
My Wife, I for Religion do not kill;
But she shall dye——because it is my will.

Por. Sir, I acknowledge I too much have done;
And therefore merit not to be your Son:
I render back the Honours which you gave;
My liberty's the only gift I crave.

Max. You take too much: —— but, e're you lay it down:
Consider what you part with in a Crown:
Monarchs of cares in Policy complain,

Because

Becauſe they would be pity'd while they raign;
For ſtill the greater troubles they confeſs,
They know, their pleaſures will be envy'd leſs.
Por. Thoſe joys I neither envy nor admire;
But beg I from the troubles may retire.
Max. What Soul is this which Empire cannot fit!
Supine and tame as a Philoſopher!
Know then, thou wert adopted to a Throne,
Not for thy ſake ſo much as for my own.
My thoughts were once about thy death at ſtrife;
And thy ſucceſſion's thy reprieve for life.
Por. My life and death are ſtill within your pow'r:
But your ſucceſſion I renounce this hour.
Upon a bloody Throne I will not ſit;
Nor ſhare the guilt of Crimes which you commit.
Max. If you are not my *Ceſar*, you muſt dye.
Por. I take it as the nobler Deſtiny.
Max. I pity thee, and would thy faults forgive;
But thus preſuming on, thou canſt not live.
Por. Sir, with your Throne your pity I reſtore;
I am your Foe; nor will I uſe it more:
Now all my debts of gratitude are paid,
I cannot truſted be, nor you betray'd. *Is going.*
Max. Stay, ſtay! in threat'ning me to be my Foe,
You give me warning to conclude you ſo.
Thou to ſucceed a Monarch in his Seat!

Enter Placidius.

No, Fool, thou art too honeſt to be great!
Placidius, on your life this Priſ'ner keep:
Our enmity ſhall end before I ſleep.
Placid. I ſtill am ready, Sir, when e're you pleaſe, *To* Porph.
To do you ſuch ſmall ſervices as theſe.
Max. The ſight with which my eyes ſhall firſt be fed.
Muſt be my Empreſs and this Traitors head.
Por. Where e're thou ſtandſt I'le level at that place
My guſhing blood, and ſpout it at thy face.

Thus,

Thus, not by Marriage, we our blood will joyn?
Nay more, my arms shall throw my head at thine. *Exit guarded.*

Max. There, go adoption: ——— I have now decreed
That *Maximin* shall *Maximin* succeed:
Old as I am, in pleasures I will try
To waste an Empire yet before I dye:
Since life is fugitive, and will not stay,
I'le make it flye more pleasantly away. *Exit.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

Valeria. Placidius.

Val. IF, as you say, you silently have been
So long my Lover, I my pow'r be seen
One hours discourse before *Porphyrius* dye,
Is all I ask, and you too may be by.

Placid. I must not break
The order, which the Emperour did sign.

Val. Has then his hand more pow'r with you than mine?

Placid. This hand if given, would far more pow'rful be
Than all the Monarchs of the World to me:
But 'tis a bait which would my heart betray;
And, when I'm fast, will soon be snatcht away.

Val. O say not so; for I shall ever be
Oblig'd to him who once obliges me.

Placid. Madam, I'le wink, and favour your deceit:
But know, fair Coz'ner, that I know the cheat:
Though to these eyes nothing can refuse,
I'le not the merit of my ruine lose;
It is enough I see the hook, and bite:
But first I'le pay my death with my delight. [*Kisses her hand, and Exit.*]

Val. What can I hope from this sad interview?
And yet my brave design I will pursue.
By many signs I have my Rival found;
But fortune him, as deep as me does wound.
For if he loves the Empress, his sad fate

More

More moves my pity, than his scorn my hate.

To her Placidius *with* Porphyrius.

Placid. I am, perhaps, the first
Who forc'd by Fate, and in his own despight,
Brought a lov'd Rival to his Mistress sight.

Val. But, in revenge, let this your comfort be,
That you have brought a man who loves not me.
However, lay your causeless envy by;
He is a Rival who must quickly dye.

Por. And yet I could with less concernment bear
That death of which you speak, than see you here.
So much of guilt in my refusal lyes,
That Debtor-like, I dare not meet your eyes.

Val. I do not blame you, if you love elsewhere:
And, would to Heav'n, I could your suff'rings bear;
Or once again could some new way invent
To take upon my self your punishment:
I sent for you, to let you know that still
(Though now I want the pow'r) I have the will.

Placid. Can all this Ocean of your kindness be
Pour'd upon him, and not one drop on me?

Val. 'Tis pour'd; but falls from this ungrateful man,
Like drops of water from a rising Swan.
Upon his breast no sign of wet remains;
He bears his Love more proudly than his Chains.

Por. This thankless man his death will soon remove,
And quickly end so undeserv'd a Love.

Val. Unthankful as you are, I know not why,
But still I love too well to see you dye.
Placidius, can you love, and see my grief,
And for my sake not offer some relief?

Placid. Not all the Gods his ruine shall prevent;
Your kindness does but urge his punishment.
Besides what can I for his safety do?
He has declar'd himself your Father's Foe.

Val. Give out he is escap'd, and set him free:
And, if you please, lay all the fault on me.

Por. O do not on those terms my freedom name:

Freed by your danger I should dye with shame.

Placid. I must not farther by your prayers be won: *To her.*
All I could do I have already done.

Val. To bring *Porphyrius* only to my sight,
Was not to show your pity, but your spight:
Would you but half oblige her you adore?
You should not have done this, or should do more.

Placid. Alas, what hope can there be left for me,
When I must sink into the Mine I see?
My heart will fall before you, if I stay;
Each word you speak saps part of it away. ——
——Yet all my Fortune on his death is set:
And he may love her, though he loves not yet.
He must — and yet she says he must not dye:
O, if I could but wink, I could deny.

To them Albinus.

Alb. The Emperour expects your Pris'ner trait:
And, with impatience, for his death does wait.

Placid. Nay, then it is too late my Love to weigh. *Exit* Alb.
Your pardon, Madam, if I must obey.

Por. I am prepar'd, he shall not long attend.

Val. Then heere my pray'rs, and my submissions end.
Placidius know, that hour in which he dyes,
My death (so well I love) shall wait on his.

Placid. O, Madam, do not fright me with your death!

Val. My life depends alone upon his breath,
But, if I live in him, you do not know
How far my gratitude to you may go;
I do not promise——but it so may prove,
That gratitude, in time, may turn to Love.
Try me——

Placid. ——Now I consider it, I will: *Musing a little*
'Tis in your pow'r to save him or to kill:
I'le run the hazard to preserve his life,
If, after that, you vow to be my Wife.

Val. Nay, good *Placidius*, now you are too hard:
Would you do nothing but for meer reward?
Like Usurers to men in want you prove,

When you would take Extortion for my Love.

Placid. You have concluded then that he must dye. [*Going with Porph.*]

Val. O stay, if no price else his life can buy,
My Love a ransom for his life I give: [*Holding her Handkerchief before her face.*]
Let my *Porphyrius* for another live.

Por. You too much value the small merchandise:
My life's o're-rated, when your Love's the price.

Enter Albinus.

Alb. I long have list'ned to your generous strife,
As much concern'd for brave *Porphyrius* life.
For mine I to his favour ow'd this day;
Which with my future Service I will pay.

Placid. Lest any your intended flight prevent,
I'le lead you first the back-way to my Tent:
Thence, in disguise, you may the City gain,
While some excuse for your escape I feign.

Val. Farewel, I must not see you when you part: [*Turning her face away.*]
For that last look would break my tender heart.
Yet — let it break — I must have one look more: [*Looking on him.*]
Nay, now I'm less contented than before.
For that last look draws on another too,
Which sure I need not to remember you.
For ever —— yet I must one glance repeat:
But quick and short as starving people eat.
So much humanity dwells in your breast,
Sometimes to think on her who loves you best. [*Going, he takes her hand and kisses it*]

Por. My wandring steps where ever Fortune bear,
Your memory I in my breast will wear.
Which, as a precious Amulet, I still
Will carry, my defence and guard from ill.
Though to my former vows I must be true,
I'le ever keep one Love entire for you.
That Love which Brothers with chaste Sisters make:
And by this Holy kiss, which now I take
From your fair hand ——
This common Sun which absent both shall see,

Shall ne're behold a breach of Faith in me.
Val. Go, go, my death will your short vows restore:
You've said enough, and I can hear no more.
Exit Valeria *one way, and* Porphy. *and* Alb. *another.*
Placid. Love and good Nature, how do you betray!
Misleading those who see and know their way!
I, whom deep Arts of State could ne're beguile,
Have sold my self to ruine for a smile.
Nay, I am driv'n so low, that I must take
That smile, as Alms, giv'n for my Rivals sake.

Enter Maximin *talking with* Valerius.

Max. And why was I not told of this before?
Val. Sir, she this evening landed on the shore.
For with her Daughter being pris'ner made,
She in another Vessel was convey'd.
Max. Bring hither the Ægyptian Princess strait. *To* Placid.
And you, *Valerius*, on her Mother wait. *Exit* Valerius.
Placid. The Mother of th' Ægyptian Princess here!
Max. *Porphyrius* death I will a while defer.
And this new opportunity improve
To make my last effort upon her Love. —— *Exit* Placidius.
Those who have youth may long endure to court;
But he must swiftly catch whose Race is short.
I in my Autumn do my Siege begin;
And must make haste e're Winter comes, to win.
This hour — no longer shall my pains endure:
Her Love shall ease me, or her death shall cure.

Enter at one door Felicia *and* Valerius, *at the other* S. Catharine *and* Placidius.

S. *Cath.* O, my dear Mother!
Fel. ——————With what joy I see
My dearest Daughter from the Tempest free.
S. *Cath.* Dearer than all the joys vain Empire yeilds,
Or then to youthful Monarchs conquer'd fields.

Before

Before you came——— my Soul
All fill'd with Heav'n did earthly joys disdain.
But you pull back some part of me again.
Placid. You see, Sir, she can owne a joy below.
Max. It much imports me that this truth I know.
Fel. How dreadful death does on the waves appear!
Where Seas we only see, and Tempest hear.
Such frightful Images did then pursue
My trembling Soul, that scarce I thought of you.
Placid. All Circumstances to your wish combine:
Her fear of death advances your design.
Fel. But to that only pow'r we serve I pray'd,
Till he, who bid it rise, the Tempest laid.
Max. You are a Christian then! *To* Felicia.
For death this very hour you must prepare:
I have decreed no Christians life to spare.
Fel. For death! I hope you but my courage try:
What ever I believe, I dare not dye.
Heav'n does not, sure, that Seal of Faith require;
Or, if it did, would firmer thoughts inspire.
A Womans witness can no credit give
To Truths Divine, and therefore I would live.
Max. I cannot give the life which you demand:
But that and mine are in your Daughter's hand:
Ask her, if she will yet her Love deny;
And bid a Monarch, and her Mother dye.
Fel. Now, mighty Prince, you cancel all my fear:
My life is safe, when it depends on her.
How can you let me languish thus in pain! *To* S. Cath.
Make haste to cure those doubts which yet remain.
Speak quickly, speak and ease me of my fear.
S. *Cath.* Alas, I doubt it is not you I hear.
Some wicked Fiend assumes your voice and face,
To make frail Nature triumph over Grace.
It cannot be———
That she who taught my Childhood Piety,
Should bid my riper age my Faith deny:
That she who bid my hopes this Crown pursue,

Should

Should snatch it from me when 'tis just in view.

Fel. Peace, peace, too much my age's shame you shew:
How easie 'tis to teach! how hard to do!
My lab'ring thoughts are with themselves at strife:
I dare not dye, nor bid you save my life.

Max. You must do one, and that without delay;
Too long already for your death I stay:
I cannot with your small concerns dispence;
For deaths of more importance call me hence.
Prepare to execute your office strait. *To his Guards.*

Fel. O stay, and let 'em but one minute wait.
Such quick Commands for death you would not give,
If you but knew how sweet it were to live.

Max. Then bid her love.

Fel. ——— Is duty grown so weak. *To S. Cath.*
That Love's a harder word than Death to speak?

S. Cath. Oh!

Fel. Mistake me not, I never can approve [*privately to*
A thing so wicked as the Tyrants Love: *S. Cath.*]
I ask you would but some false promise give,
Only to gain me so much time to live.

S. Cath. That promise is a step to greater sin,
The hold once lost, we seldom take again.
Each bound to Heav'n we faintly Essays make;
Still losing somewhat till we quite go back.

Max. Away, I grant no longer a reprieve.

Fel. O do but beg my life, and I may live. *To S. Cath.*
Have you not so much pity in your breast?
He stays to have you make it your request.

S. Cath. To beg your life ———
Is not to ask a grace of *Maximin*:
It is a silent bargain for a sin.
Could we live always, life were worth our cost;
But now we keep with care what must be lost.
Here we stand shiv'ring on the Bank, and cry,
When we should plunge into Eternity.
One moment ends our pain;
And yet the shock of death we dare not stand,

By thought scarce measur'd, and too swift for sand:
'Tis but because the Living death ne're knew,
They fear to prove it as a thing that's new.
Let me th' Experiment before you try,
I'le show you first how easie 'tis to dye.

Max. Draw then that Curtain, and let death appear,
And let both see how easie 'twill be there.

The Scene opens, and shews the Wheel.

Fel. Alas, what torments I already feel!

Max. Go, bind her hand and foot beneath that Wheel:
Four of you turn the dreadful Engine round;
Four others hold her fast'ned to the ground:
That by degrees her tender breasts may feel,
First the rough razings of the pointed steel:
Her Paps then let the bearded Tenters stake,
And on each hook a gory Gobbet take,
Till th' upper flesh by piece-meal torn away,
Her beating heart shall to the Sun display.

Fel. My dearest Daughter at your feet I fall; *Kneeling.*
Hear, Oh yet hear your wretched Mothers call.
Think, at your Birth, ah think what pains I bore,
And can your eyes behold me suffer more?
You were the Child which from your infancy
I still lov'd best, and then you best lov'd me,
About my neck your little arms you spred,
Nor could you sleep without me in the bed,
But sought my bosom when you went to rest,
And all night long would lye across my breast,
Nor without cause did you that fondness show:
You may remember when our *Nile* did flow;
While on the Bank you innocently stood,
And with a Wand made Circles in the flood,
That rose, and just was hurrying you to death,
When I, from far, all pale and out of breath,
Ran and rusht in———
And from the waves my floating pledge did bear,
So much my Love was stronger than my fear.
But you———

Max.

Max. Woman, for these long tales your life's too short;
Go, bind her quickly, and begin the sport.

Fel. No, in her arms my Sanctuary's plac'd: [*Running to her Daughter.*]
Thus I will cling for ever to her waste.

Max. What must my will by women be controll'd?
Haste, draw your Weapons, and cut off her hold.

S. Cath. Thus my last duty to you let me pay; [*Kissing her Mother.*]
Yet, Tyrant, I to thee will never pray.
Though hers to save I my own life would give,
Yet by my sin, my Mother shall not live.
To thy foul lust I never can consent;
Why dost thou then defer my punishment?
I scorn those Gods thou vainly dost adore:
Contemn thy Empire, but thy Bed abhor.
If thou would'st yet a bloodier Tyrant be,
I will instruct thy rage, begin with me.

Max. I thank thee that thou dost my anger move:
It is a Tempest that will wreck my Love.
I'le pull thee hence, close hidden as thou art, [*Claps his hand to his breast.*]
And stand with my drawn Sword before my heart.
Yes, you shall be obey'd, though I am loth,
Go, and while I can bid you, bind 'em both.
Go, bind 'em e're my fit of Love return:
Fire shall quench fire, and anger Love shall burn.
Thus I prevent those follies I should do;
And 'tis the nobler Fever of the two.

Fel. Torn piece by piece, alas what horrid pains!

S. Cath. Heav'n is all mercy, who that death ordains.
And that which Heav'n thinks best is surely so:
But bare and naked, shame to undergo,
'Tis somewhat more than death!
Expos'd to lawless eyes I dare not be,
My modesty is sacred, Heav'n to thee.
Let not my body be the Tyrant's spoil;
Nor hands nor eyes thy purity defile.

Amariel descends swiftly with a flaming Sword, and strikes at the Wheel, which breaks in pieces, then he ascends again.

Max. Is this th' effect of all your boasted skill? ——

These

These brittle toys to execute my will?
A Puppet-show of death I only find,
Where I a strong and sinewy pain design'd,
By what weak infant was this Engine wrought?

Val. From *Bilbilis* the temper'd steel was brought:
Metall more tough the Anvil ne're did beat,
Nor, from the Forge, did hissing waters heat.

Placid. I saw a Youth descend all Heav'nly fair,
Who in his hand a flaming Sword did bear,
And, Whirlwind-like, around him drove the Air.
At his rais'd arm the rigid Iron shook;
And, bending backwards, fled before the stroke.

Max. What! Miracles, the tricks of Heav'n to me?
I'le try if she be wholly Iron free.
If not by Sword, then she shall dye by fire;
And one by one her Miracles I'le tire.
If proof against all kind of death she be,
My Love's immortal, and she's fit for me.

S. *Cath.* No, Heav'n has shown its pow'r, and now thinks fit
Thee to thy former fury to remit.
Had Providence my longer life decreed,
Thou from thy passion hadst not yet been freed.
But Heav'n, which suffer'd that, my Faith to prove,
Now to its self does vindicate my Love.
A pow'r controuls thee which thou dost not see;
And that's a Miracle it works in thee.

Max. The truth of this new Miracle we'll try;
To prove it, you must take the pains to dye.
Bring me their heads——

Fel. That mercy, Tyrant, thou deny'st to me,
At thy last breath may Heav'n refuse to thee.
My fears are going, and I death can view:
I see, I see, him there thy steps pursue,
And with a lifted arm and silent pace,
Stalk after thee, just aiming in his chace.

S. *Cath.* No more, dear Mother, 'ill in death it shows
Your peace of mind by rage to discompose:
No streak of blood (the reliques of the Earth)

Shall ſtain my Soul in her immortal birth;
But ſhe ſhall mount all pure, a white, and Virgin mind;
And full of all that peace, which there ſhe goes to find.

Exeunt S. Catharine *and* Felicio, *with* Valerius *and Guards. The Scene ſhuts.*

Max. She's gone, and pull'd my heart-ſtrings as ſhe went.
Were penitence no ſhame, I could repent.
Yet 'tis of bad example ſhe ſhould live;
For I might get th' ill habit to forgive.
Thou ſoft Seducer of my heart, away——
Who ling'ring would'ſt about its confines ſtay
To watch when ſome Rebellion would begin;
And ready at each ſigh to enter in.
In vain; for thou
Doſt on the outſide of the body play,
And when drawn neareſt, ſhalt be whirl'd away.
What ails me, that I cannot loſe thy thought!
Command the Empreſs hither to be brought; *To* Placid.
I in her death ſhall ſome diverſion find,
And rid my thoughts at once of woman-kind.

Placid. 'Tis well he thinks not of *Porphyrius* yet. *Aſide. Exit.*

Max. How hard it is this beauty to forget!
My ſtormy rage has only ſhook my will:
She crept down lower, but ſhe ſticks there ſtill.
Fool that I am to ſtruggle thus with Love!
Why ſhould I that which pleaſes me remove?
True, ſhe ſhould dye were ſhe concern'd alone;
But I love, not for her ſake, but my own.
Our Gods are Gods 'cauſe they have pow'r and will;
Who can do all things, can do nothing ill.
Ill is Rebellion 'gainſt ſome higher pow'r:
The World may ſin, but not its Emperour.
My Empreſs then ſhall dye, my Princeſs live;
If this be ſin I do my ſelf forgive.

To him Valerius.

Val. Your will's obey'd; for mighty Emperour,
The Princeſs and her Mother are no more.

Max. She is not dead!

Val. ——————Great Sir, your will was so.

Max. That was my will of half an hour ago.
But now 'tis alter'd; I have chang'd her Fate,
She shall not dye.

Val. ——————Your pity comes too late.
Betwixt her Guards she seem'd by Bride-men led,
Her cheeks with cheerful blushes were o'respred,
When, smiling, to the Ax she bow'd her head.
Just at the stroke ——————
Ætherial musick did her death prepare;
Like joyful sounds of Spousals in the Air.
A radiant light did her crown'd Temples guild,
And all the place with fragrant scents was fill'd.
The Balmy mist came thick'ning to the ground,
And sacred silence cover'd all around,
But when (its work perform'd) the Cloud withdrew,
And day restor'd us to each others view,
I sought her head to bring it on my Spear;
In vain I sought it, for it was not there.
No part remain'd; but from afar our sight
Discover'd in the Air long tracks of light;
Of charming Notes we heard the last rebounds,
And Musick dying in remoter sounds.

Max. And dost thou think
This lame account fit for a Love-sick King?
Go—from the other World a better bring. [*Kills him, then sets his foot on him, and speaks on.*]
When in my breast two mighty passions strove,
Thou had'st err'd better in obeying Love;
'Tis true, that way thy death had follow'd too.
But I had then been less displeas'd than now.
Now I must live unquiet for thy sake;
And this poor recompence is all I take. *Spurns the body.*

Here the Scene opens and discovers Berenice *on a Scaffold, the Guards by her, and amongst them* Porphyrius *and* Albinus, *like Moors, as all the Guards are.* Placidius *enters, and whispers the Emperour whilst* Porphyrius *speaks.*

Por. From *Berenice* I cannot go away;

But, like a Ghoſt, muſt near my Treaſure ſtay.

Alb. Night and this ſhape ſecure us from their eyes.

Por. Have courage then for our bold enterpriſe.
Duty and Faith no tye on me can have,
Since I renounc'd thoſe Honours which he gave.

Max. The time is come we dit ſo long attend, *To* Berenice.
Which muſt theſe diſcords of our Marriage end.
Yet *Berenice* remember you have been
An Empreſs, and the Wife of *Maximin.*

Ber. I will remember I have been your Wife;
And therefore, dying, beg from Heav'n your life:
Be all the diſcords of our Bed forgot,
Which, Vertue witneſs, I did never ſpot.
What errors I have made, though while I live,
You cannot pardon, to the dead forgive.

Max. How much ſhe is to piety inclin'd!
Behead her while ſhe's in ſo good a mind.

Por. Stand firm, *Albinus*, now the time is come
To free the Empreſs.

Alb. ——— And deliver *Rome.*

Por. Within I feel my hot blood ſwell my heart,
And generous tremblings in each outward part,
'Tis done——Tyrant, this is thy lateſt hour.
Porphyrius *and* Albinus *draw, and are making at the Emperour.*

Ber. Look to your ſelf, my Lord the Emperour:
Treaſon, help, help, my Lord!
Maximin *turns and defends himſelf, the Guards ſet on* Porphyrius *and* Albinus.

Max. Diſarm 'em, but their lives I charge you ſpare.
After they are diſarm'd,
Unmaſk 'em, and diſcover who they are.
Good Gods, is it *Porphyrius* whom I ſee!

Placid. I wonder how he gain'd his liberty.

Max. Traytor!

Por. ——— Know, Tyrant, I can hear that name
Rather than Son, and bear it with leſs ſhame.
Traytor's a name which were my arm yet free,

The Roman Senate would beſtow on thee.

To Ber. Ah, Madam, you have ruin'd my deſign,
And loſt your life; for I regard not mine.
Too ill a Miſtreſs, and too good a Wife.

Ber. It was my duty to preſerve his life.

Max. Now I perceive *To* Porphyrius
In what cloſe walk your mind ſo long did move:
You ſcorn'd my Throne, aſpiring to her Love.

Ber. In death I'le owne a Love to him ſo pure;
As will the teſt of Heav'n it ſelf endure.
A Love ſo chaſt, as Conſcience could not chide;
But cheriſh it, and kept it by its ſide.
A Love which never knew a hot deſire,
But flam'd as harmleſs as a lambent fire.
A Love which, pure from Soul to Soul might paſs,
As light tranſmitted through a Cryſtal glaſs.
Which gave *Porphyrius* all without a ſin;
Yet kept entire the Right of *Maximin*.

Max. The beſt return that I to both can make.
Shall be to ſuffer for each others ſake.

Por. Barbarian, do not dare her blood to ſhed,
Who from my vengeance ſav'd thy curſed head.
A flight no Honour ever reach'd before;
And which ſucceeding Ages will adore.

Ber. Porphyrius I muſt dye!
That common debt to Nature paid muſt be;
But I have left a debt unpaid to thee.
To *Maximin*——
I have perform'd the duty of a Wife;
But, ſaving his, I caſt away thy life.
Ah, what ill Stars upon our Loves did ſhine,
That I am more thy Murd'rer than he mine.

Max. Make haſte.

Por. So haſty none in execution are,
But they allow the dying time for pray'r:
Farewel, ſweet Saint, my prayer ſhall be to you:
My Love has been unhappy, but 'twas true.
Remember me! Alas what have I ſed?

You

You must dye too!
But yet remember me when you are dead.
Ber. If I dye first I will———
Stop short of Heav'n, and wait you in a Cloud;
For fear we lose each other in the crowd.
Por. Love is the only Coyn in Heav'n will go:
Then take all with you, and leave none below.
Ber. 'Tis want of knowledge, not of Love, I fear.
Lest we mistake when bodies are not there,
O as a mark that I could wear a Scroul,
With this Inscription, *Berenice's* Soul.
Por. That needs not, sure, for none will be so bright,
So pure, or with so small allays of light.
Max. From my full eyes fond tears begin to start;
Dispatch, they practise treason on my heart.
Por. Adieu: this farewel sigh I as my last bequeath,
Catch it, 'tis Love expiring in a breath.
Ber. This sigh of mine shall meet it half the way,
As pledges giv'n that each for other stay.

Enter Valeria *and* Cydon.

Val. What dismal Scene of Death is here prepar'd!
Max. Now strike.
Val. They shall not strike till I am heard.
Max. From whence does this new impudence proceed,
That you dare alter that which I decreed?
Val. Ah, Sir, to what strange courses do you fly,
To make your self abhorr'd for cruelty!
The Empire groans under your bloody Reign,
And its vast body bleeds in every vein.
Gasping and pale, and fearing more, it lyes;
And now you stab it in the very eyes:
Your *Cæsar* and the Partner of your Bed;
Ah who can wish to live when they are dead?
If ever gentle pity touch'd your brest———
——I cannot speak, but my tears shall speak the rest.
Weeping and sobbing.

Por.

Por. She adds new grief to what I felt before,
And Fate has now no room to put in more.

Max. Away, thou ſhame and ſlander of my blood. [*To* Val.
Who taught thee to be pitiful or good?

Val. What hope have I
The name of Vertue ſhould prevail with him,
Who thinks ev'n it, for which I plead, a crime?
Yet Nature, ſure, ſome Argument may be;
If them you cannot pity, pity me.

Max. I will, and all the World ſhall judge it ſo:
I will th' exceſs of pity to you ſhow.
You aſk to ſave
A dangerous Rebel, and diſloyal Wife,
And I in mercy —— will not take your life.

Val. You more than kill me by this cruelty,
And in their perſons bid your Daughter dye.
I honour *Berenice's* Vertue much;
But for *Porphyrius* my Love is ſuch,
I cannot, will not live when he is gone.

Max. I'le do that Cure for you which on my ſelf is done.
You muſt, like me, your Lovers life remove;
Cut off you hope, and you deſtroy your Love,
If it were hard I would not bid you try
The Med'cine: but 'tis but to let him dye.
Yet ſince you are ſo ſoft, (which you call good)
And are not yet confirm'd enough in blood
To ſee his death;
Your frailty ſhall be favour'd with this grace,
That they ſhall ſuffer in another place.
If after they are dead, their memory
By any chance into your mind be brought,
Laugh, and divert it with ſome other thought.
Away with 'em.

Exeunt Berenice, Porphyrius, Albinus *carried off by Guards.*

Val. Since pray'rs nor tears can bend his cruel mind, [*Looking*
Farewel, the beſt and braveſt of Mankind; *after* Porph.]
How I have lov'd Heav'n knows; but there's a Fate,

Which

Which hinders me from being fortunate.
My Father's Crimes hang heavy on my head,
And like a groomy Cloud about me spread;
I would in vain be pious, that's a grace
Which Heav'n permits not to a Tyrant's race.

Max. Hence to her Tent the foolish Girl convey.

Val. Let me be just before I go away:
Placidius, I have vow'd to be your Wife;
Take then my hand, 'tis yours while I have life.
One moment here, I must another's be:
But this *Porphyrius* gives me back to thee.

Stabs her self twice, and then Placidius *wrests the Dagger from her.*

Placid. Help, help the Princess, help!

Max. What rage has urg'd this act which thou hast done?

Val. Thou, Tyrant, and thy Crimes have pull'd it on.
Thou who canst death with such a pleasure see,
Now take thy fill, and glut thy sight in me.
But — I'le th' occasion of my death forget;
Save him I love, and be my Father yet:
I can no more——*Porphyrius*, my dear——

Cyd. Alas, she raves, and thinks *Porphyrius* here.

Val. Have I not yet deserv'd thee now I dye?
Is *Berenice* still more fair than I?
Porphyrius, do not swim before my sight;
Stand still, and let me, let me aim aright.
Stand still but while thy poor *Valeria* dyes,
And sighs her Soul into her Lovers eyes. *Dyes.*

Placid. She's gone from Earth, and with her went away
All of the Tyrant that deserv'd to stay:
I've lost in her all joys that life can give;
And only to revenge her death would live—— *Aside.*

Cyd. The Gods have claim'd her, and we must resign.

Max. What had the Gods to do with me or mine?
Did I molest your Heav'n?——
Why should you then make *Maximin* your Foe,
Who paid you Tribute, which he need not do?
Your Altars I with smoke of Gums did crown?

For

For which you lean'd your hungry noſtrils down.
All daily gaping for my Incenſe there,
More than your Sun could draw you in a year.
And you for this theſe Plagues on me have ſent;
But by the Gods, (by *Maximin* I meant)
Henceforth I and my World
Hoſtility with you and yours declare, ——
Look to it, Gods; for you th' Aggreſſors are.
Keep you your Rain and Sun-ſhine in your Skies,
And I'le keep back my flame and Sacrifice.
Your Trade of Heav'n ſhall ſoon be at a ſtand,
And all your Goods lie dead upon your hand.

Placid. Thus, Tyrant, ſince the Gods th' Aggreſſors are, [*Stabbing him.*]
Thus by this ſtroke they have begun the War.

Maximin *ſtruggles with him, and gets the Dagger from him.*

Max. Thus I return the ſtrokes which they have giv'n; [*Stabbing* Placid.]
Thus, Traytor, thus, and thus I would to Heav'n.

Placidius *falls, and the Emperour ſtaggers after him, and ſits down upon him, the Guards come to help the Emperour.*

Max. Stand off, and let me, e're my ſtrength be gone,
Take my laſt pleaſure of revenge, alone.

Enter a Centurion.

Cen. Arm, arm, the Camp is in a mutiny:
For *Rome* and Liberty the Souldiers cry.
Porphyrius mov'd their pity as he went,
To reſcue *Berenice* from puniſhment,
And now he heads their new-attempted crime.

Max. Now I am down, the Gods have watch'd their time.
You think ——
To ſave your credit, feeble Deities;
But I will give my ſelf the ſtrength to riſe.

He ſtrives to get up, and being up, ſtaggers.

It wonnot be ——
My body has not pow'r my mind to bear.
I muſt return again —— and conquer here.

Sits down upon the Body.

My coward Body does my will controul;
Farewel thou base Deserter of my Soul.
I'le shake this Carcass off, and be obey'd;
Reign an Imperial Ghost without its aid.
Go, Souldiers, take my Ensigns with you, fight,
And vanquish Rebels in your Soveraign's right:
Before I die———
Bring me *Porphyrius* and my Empress dead,
I would brave Heav'n, in my each hand a head.
Placid. Do not regard a dying Tyrants breath. [*To the Souldiers.*]
He can but look revenge on you in death.
Max. Vanquish'd, and dar'st thou yet a Rebel be?
Thus—I can more than look revenge on thee. [*Stabs him again.*
Placid. Oh, I am gone! *Dyes.*
Max.———And after thee I go,
Revenging still, and following ev'n to th' other world my blow.
Stabs him again.
And shoving back this Earth on which I sit,
I'le mount——and scatter all the Gods I hit. *Dyes.*

Enter Porphyrius, Berenice, Albinus, *Souldiers.* Porphyrius *looks on the Bodies entring, and speaks.*

Por. 'Tis done before, (this mighty work of Fate!)
And I am glad our Swords are come too late.
He was my Prince, and though a bloody one,
I should have conquer'd and have mercy shown.
Sheath all your Swords, and cease your enmity;
They are not Foes, but *Romans* whom you see.
Ber. He was my Tyrant, but my Husband too;
And therefore duty will some tears allow.
Por. Placidius here!
And fair *Valeria* new depriv'd of breath?
Who can unriddle this dumb-show of death?
Cyd. When, Sir, her Father did your life deny,
She kill'd her self, that she with you might dye.
Placidius made the Emp'rours death his crime;
Who, dying, did revenge his death on him.
Porphyrius *kneels and takes* Valeria's *hand.*

Por. For thy dear ſake I vow each week I live
One day to faſting and juſt grief I'le give:
And what hard Fate did to thy life deny,
My gratitude ſhall pay thy memory.

Cen. Mean time to you belongs th' Imperial pow'r:
We with one voice ſalute you Emperour.

Souldiers. Long live *Porphyrius* Emperour of the *Romans.*

Por. Too much, my Country-men, your Love you ſhow,
That you have thought me worthy to be ſo.
But, to requite that Love, I muſt take care
Not to ingage you in a Civil War.
Two Emperours at *Rome* the Senate choſe,
And whom they chuſe no *Roman* ſhould oppoſe.
In Peace or War, let Monarchs, hope or fear;
All my ambition ſhall be bounded here.

Kiſſing Berenice's *hand.*

Ber. I have too lately been a Prince's Wife,
And fear th' unlucky Omen of the life.
Like a rich Veſſel beat by ſtorms to ſhore,
'Twere madneſs ſhould I venture out once more.
Of glorious troubles I will take no part,
And in no Empire reign, but of your heart.

Por. Let to the winds your golden Eagles flye, [*To the Souldiers.*]
Your Trumpets ſound a bloodleſs Victory:
Our Arms no more let *Aquileia* fear,
But to her Gates our peacefull enſignes bear.
While I mix Cypreſs with my Myrtle Wreath:
Joy for your life, and mourn *Valeria's* Death.

Exeunt omnes.

Epilogue

Epilogue

Spoken by Mrs. *Ellen*, when she was to be carried off dead by the Bearers.

To the Bearer. *Hold, are you mad? you damn'd confounded Dog,*
I am to rise, and speak the Epilogue.

To the Audience. *I come, kind Gentlemen, strange news to tell ye,*
I am the Ghost of poor departed Nelly.
Sweet Ladies, be not frighted, I'le be civil,
I'm what I was, a little harmless Devil.
For after death, we Sprights, have just such Natures;
We had for all the World, when humane Creatures;
And therefore I that was an Actress here,
Play all my Tricks in Hell, a Goblin there.
Gallants, look to't, you say there are no Sprights;
But I'le come dance about your Beds at nights.
And faith you'l be in a sweet kind of taking,
When I surprise you between sleep and waking.
To tell you true, I walk because I dye
Out of my Calling in a Tragedy.
O Poet, damn'd dull Poet, who could prove
So senseless! to make Nelly *dye for Love;*
Nay, what's yet worse, to kill me in the prime
Of Easter-*Term, in Tart and Cheese-cake time!*
I'le fit the Fopp; for I'le not one word say
T' excuse his godly out of fashion Play.
A Play, which if you dare but twice sit out,
You'l all be slander'd, and be thought devout
But, farewel Gentlemen, make haste to me,
I'm sure e're long to have your company.
As for my Epitaph when I am gone,
I'le trust no Poet, but will write my own.

Here *Nelly* lies, who, though she liv'd a Slater'n,
Yet dy'd a Princess, acting in S. *Cathar'n.*

FINIS.